

THE TEMPLE
ENGLISH LITERATURE
SERIES
FOR SCHOOLS

SELECTIONS FROM
THE CONQUEST OF
MEXICO AND PERU



William H. Prescott

SELECTIONS FROM THE
CONQUEST OF MEXICO &
PERU BY W. H. PRESCOTT

PUT INTO A CONTINUOUS
NARRATIVE AND EDITED BY
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LONDON

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INTRODUCTION

LIFE OF PRESCOTT

THE life of the author of the *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, and of the *History of Peru*, is the story of how stern determination overcame difficulties which would have daunted many another man. Had he not been compounded of sterner stuff than the average labourer in the field of letters, he would have folded his hands, murmured some platitude about his misfortune being the will of Heaven and that there was no use of fighting against Providence, then have quietly resigned himself to face the inevitable. Prescott, however, realised that God helps those that help themselves, and never has the saying received more striking verification than in his life story.

William Hickling Prescott was born at Salem, Massachusetts, May 4, 1796. He came of a race distinguished in the annals of the United States. His grandfather (1726-1795) had been a famous patriot-soldier in the War of Independence, had fought in several battles, and was particularly instrumental in making that noble stand on Bunker's Hill, which made it one of the "glory spots" in the history of the "Great Republic." To that grandfather a monument has been erected on the "Hill." Prescott's father was a lawyer with a

large and lucrative practice. From his earliest boyhood, the historian was thrown into a society pronouncedly literary and intellectual, so that even from schooldays he evinced a decided bent towards letters. Entering Harvard College in 1811, he had a most distinguished career, graduating with special distinction in 1814. All the more meritorious was this, inasmuch as in his second year, a crust of bread, playfully thrown at him by a fellow-student, had struck his left eye. Inflammation supervened, and he lost the sight of that optic. But he was so anxious for mental improvement that he failed to observe his doctor's orders, with regard to resting the remaining eye. The consequence was it became sympathetically affected, inducing temporary blindness, and for months the earnest student had to sit in a darkened room. But he engaged others to read to him, the reader sitting in one room and the listener in another. When he was so far convalescent as to be able to travel he went upon an extended tour throughout Europe, learning French, Italian and Spanish, and laid the foundations of that marvellous acquaintance with Spanish history and literature which was surpassed by none of his contemporaries.

In 1820 he married, and as he had a sufficiency of private means settled on him by his father he relinquished the idea of prosecuting law as a profession and devoted himself to letters. The conditions under which he was compelled to pursue his studies, viz., in dependence solely upon his secretary reading aloud to him, would have speedily become so tedious as to be intolerable to any man possessed of less enthusiasm or less

patience than Prescott. Gradually he amassed a fund of scholarship upon the little explored field of the Spanish occupation of America which ere long made him the greatest authority of his age on the subject.

His works followed each other rapidly, but his life was so uneventful that it is virtually summed up in the dates of the publication of his histories. In 1838 appeared *Ferdinand and Isabella*, which created an almost unexampled *furor*. Five years later (1843) was published the *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, and four years subsequent the *Conquest of Peru* (1847). In 1850 he visited Europe, and was received in every country with the utmost enthusiasm and esteem. On returning to America he published in 1855 the two first volumes of the *History of Philip II.*, the third volume of which appeared in 1858. He was busy mapping out fresh schemes of work when death supervened, and he died of apoplexy at Boston in January 1859.

PRESCOTT'S STYLE AND METHOD

As a historian Prescott stands in the very first rank. His style is a striking combination of splendour and simplicity. Though one of the most ornate and figurative of writers, his examples and illustrations are so appropriate and so familiar that the most untrained mind can grasp them. He delights in taking figures from the life around him, and some of his happiest effects are secured by the employment of figures of speech which many other writers would have rejected as savour-

ing of bathos or the bizarre. In his historical method his outstanding qualities are vividness and picturesqueness of narrative, carefully calculated effects in which surprise at some quaint trope or pleasure over some impressive bit of word painting are in constant evidence in our minds. Furthermore Prescott's accuracy in matters of fact, and wise caution in criticising doubtful topics and men, the motives of whose actions were open to diverse constructions, rendered his judgments respected even when the reader might not agree with him in every detail. He shone in the arrangement of his matter, his rule being that an author should expect no mercy from his reader nor should the latter grant it. Among his contemporaries he was exceedingly popular, his modesty and his readiness to assist humbler members of the craft of letters rendering him a sort of "father confessor" into whose ear his friends poured their troubles. As a historian he also excels in the arrangement of great masses of facts and details, whereby he supplies us with a large amount of statistical information, yet imparts it with such consummate art as never to weary the reader.

His prolonged struggle on the face of the terrible odds of ever impending blindness coupled with his determination through it all, only to produce literature of the highest class, endear his memory to all lovers of worthy and well-done work. His character constitutes an example worthy of imitation, of a man whose sole desire was to do his duty conscientiously and consistently in the sight of God and men.

CONQUEST OF MEXICO

This volume was issued as we have seen in three volumes in 1843, having occupied Prescott's attention from 1838, when *Ferdinand and Isabella* saw the light. It takes rank as his greatest work. In it he reveals in full measure his marvellous faculty of æe-vivifying the past. The days and deeds of the "Conquistadors" live once more before us. "Stout Cortes and his men," Alvarado, Sandoval, Olid and many others are drawn in outlines so firm yet with touches so minute and painstaking, that no one, having ever perused this fascinating work, can forget it. It is a romance as well as a history, and the doings of these doughty Cavaliers of the West raise in our breasts an interest as intense as the most exciting of novels.

Nor does Prescott sacrifice truth to sensation. In few instances indeed has his accuracy been impugned, in fewer still has it been shown actually at fault after being impugned. The account immediately preceding his, that written by the celebrated Principal Robertson, the historian, is so much more meagre in details and is so manifestly astray on many points of fact owing to the sources of information open to Prescott not being accessible seventy years before to the learned Principal of Edinburgh University, that the history of the latter is in many respects superseded. Prescott certainly did not possess the power of drawing those far-reaching political and philosophic conclusions from the facts he had amassed, which render Robertson's *History of America*, even to this day, a work of unquestionable value. He was rather

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a rapid painter of manners, a picturesque delineator of the ideas stimulating the early explorers to dare all for the dual end of the extension of their Sovereign's kingdom and their own aggrandisement. Prescott is the more vivid and entertaining narrator, Robertson the greater historian.

CONQUEST OF PERU

Prescott's second great history of the conquest of Central and South America was published in two volumes in 1847, four years after the issue of the "Mexico." The former derived lustre from the great reputation already secured by the latter, and inevitably there were comparisons drawn between them. They are both works of high genius and scholarship, and well worthy of all the encomiums which from then till now have been showered upon them.

Prescott's "Mexico" and "Peru" must be read consecutively in order to be judged. If we do this we shall then perceive that while the "Mexico" is perhaps the more fascinating story, the "Peru" is the more finished and symmetrical work of historic art. In the "Mexico" Prescott sought to tell the story of Cortes as that of a young, handsome, brave and chivalrous cavalier, full of daring and determination, suddenly placed by a freak of fortune at the head of one of the most "forlorn hopes" the world has ever seen. As the historian himself says:—

"That a small body of men like the Spaniards, indifferently armed and equipped, should have landed on the shores of a powerful Empire, inhabited by a fierce and warlike race, and in defiance of the reiterated prohibitions of its Sovereign have forced their way into the

interior: that they should have done this without knowledge of the language or the land, without chart or compass to guide them, without any idea of the difficulties they were to encounter, totally uncertain whether the next step might bring them on a hostile nation or on a desert, feeling their way along in the dark as it were;—that, though nearly overwhelmed in their first encounter with the inhabitants, they should have still pressed on to the Capital of the Empire, and having reached it, thrown themselves unhesitatingly into the midst of their enemies; that so far from being daunted by the extraordinary spectacle there exhibited of power and civilisation they should have been but the more confirmed in their original design; that they should have seized the Monarch, have executed his ministers before the eyes of his subjects, and when driven forth with ruin from the gates, have gathered their scattered wreck together, and after a system of actions pursued with consummate policy and daring, have succeeded in overturning the Capital and establishing their sway over the country;—that all this should have been so effected by a mere handful of indigent adventurers, is a fact little short of the miraculous,—too startling for the probabilities demanded by fiction and without a parallel in the pages of history.”

The “Mexico” is therefore the apotheosis of Cortes. Not that Prescott blinks the blunders of his hero, or hides his faults. He blames with stern indignation the execution of Guatemozin, and asserts that the remorse of Cortes was the vindication of the innocence of the victim even as, in the “Peru,” he bitterly reprobates the judicial murder of the Inca Atahuallpa. The “Mexico,” however, is a prose epic wherein are related the high achievements of youth and its lofty ambition, the intrepidity yet the profound sagacity of the young leader, and finally his marvellous influence

over his fellows. It is not too much to say that but for this wonderful gift, Cortes would have been deserted and his bones would have whitened on the plains of Tlascala—the earliest of his triumphs.

The “Peru,” on the other hand, is a more sober story throughout. It deals less in wonders—though the capture of the Inca is as extraordinary as anything in the “Mexico”—it seeks to describe the political, religious, social and ethnological characteristics of the country at somewhat greater length and certainly with greater minuteness than is done in the earlier work. Pizarro, of course, was a less picturesque and romantic figure than Cortes, and did not go so far in fascinating the imagination of the historian. If, however, the “Mexico” is perhaps the more interesting, the “Peru” is undoubtedly the abler work, and in the latter the writer rises in some degree to the level of a constitutional historian, when he seeks to describe the re-creation of Peru by the conquerors, after the rule of the Incas had passed into a mere shadow of authority.

The extracts which follow are intended to give in brief space a connected story of the conquest of both these great Empires. The difficulty has been to keep the matter within the bounds prescribed, entailing as this did the excision of what was recognised to be of intense interest. The rule that has been followed was in either case only to cite such passages as bore upon the final catastrophe, in order that a continuous narrative might be preserved throughout.

Without further prelude let us begin the extracts.

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MEXICO

SPAIN AND COLONISATION

IN the beginning of the sixteenth century, Spain occupied perhaps the most prominent position on the theatre of Europe. The numerous states into which she had been so long divided were consolidated into one monarchy. The Moslem crescent, after reigning there for eight centuries, was no longer seen on her borders. The authority of the crown did not, as in later times, overshadow the inferior orders of the state. The people enjoyed the estimable privilege of political representation, and exercised it with manly independence. The nation at large could boast as great a degree of constitutional freedom as any other, at that time, in Christendom. Under a system of salutary laws and an equitable administration, domestic tranquillity was secured, public credit established, trade, manufactures, and even the more elegant arts, began to flourish; while a higher education called forth the first blossoms of that literature which was to ripen into so rich a harvest before the close of the century. Arms abroad kept pace with arts at home. Spain found her empire suddenly enlarged by important acquisitions both in Europe and Africa, while a New World beyond the waters

poured into her lap treasures of countless wealth and opened an unbounded field for honourable enterprise.

Such was the condition of the kingdom at the close of the long and glorious reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, when on the 23rd of January 1516, the sceptre passed into the hands of their daughter Joanna, or rather their grandson, Charles the Fifth, who alone ruled the monarchy during the long and imbecile existence of his unfortunate mother. During the two years following Ferdinand's death, the regency, in the absence of Charles, was held by Cardinal Ximenes, a man whose intrepidity, extraordinary talents and capacity for great enterprises were accompanied by a haughty spirit, which made him too indifferent as to the means of their execution.

It is difficult for those of our time, as familiar from childhood with the most remote places on the globe as with those in their own neighbourhood, to picture to themselves the feelings of the men who lived in the sixteenth century. The dread mystery which had so long hung over the great deep had, indeed, been removed. It was no longer beset with the same undefined horrors as when Columbus launched his bold bark on its dark and unknown waters. A new and glorious world had been thrown open.

Under this chivalrous spirit of enterprise, the progress of discovery had extended, by the beginning of Charles the Fifth's reign, from the Bay of Honduras, along the winding shores of Darien and the South American continent, to the Rio de la Plata. The mighty barrier of the Isthmus had

been climbed, and the Pacific descried, by Nuñez de Balboa, second only to Columbus in his valiant band of "ocean chivalry." The Bahamas and Caribbee Islands had been explored, as well as the Peninsula of Florida on the northern continent. This latter point had been reached by Sebastian Cabot in his descent along the coast from Labrador, in 1497. So that before 1518, the period when our narrative begins, the eastern borders of both the great continents had been surveyed through nearly their whole extent. The shores of the great Mexican Gulf, however, sweeping with a wide circuit far into the interior, remained still concealed, with the rich realms that lay beyond, from the eye of the navigator. The time had now come for their discovery.

The business of colonization had kept pace with that of discovery. In several of the islands, and in various parts of Terra Firma, and in Darien, settlements had been established, under the control of governors who affected the state and authority of viceroys. Grants of land were assigned to the colonists, on which they raised the natural products of the soil, but gave still more attention to the sugar-cane, imported from the Canaries. Of the islands, Cuba was the second discovered, but no attempt had been made to plant a colony there in the lifetime of Columbus, who indeed, after skirting the whole extent of its southern coast, died in the conviction that it was part of the continent. At length in 1511, Diego, son and successor of the "Admiral" (as Columbus had been called), who still maintained the seat of government in Hispaniola, finding the mines much exhausted there,

proposed to occupy the neighbouring island of Cuba, or Fernandina, as it was called in compliment to the Spanish monarch. He prepared a small force for the conquest, which he placed under the command of Don Diego Velasquez; a man described by a contemporary as "possessed of considerable experience in military affairs, having served seventeen years in the European wars; as honest, illustrious by his lineage and reputation, covetous of glory, and somewhat more covetous of wealth." The portrait was sketched by no unfriendly hand.

Velasquez, or rather his lieutenant, Narvaez, who took the office on himself of scouring the country, met with no serious opposition from the inhabitants, who were of the same family with the effeminate natives of Hispaniola. The conquest, through the merciful interposition of Las Cases, "the protector of the Indians," who accompanied the army in its march, was effected without much bloodshed.

After the conquest, Velasquez, now appointed governor, diligently occupied himself with measures for promoting the prosperity of the island. The affairs of his government did not prevent him, meanwhile, from casting many a wistful glance at the discoveries going forward on the continent, and he longed for an opportunity to embark in these golden adventures himself. Fortune gave him the occasion he desired.

An hidalgo of Cuba, named Hernandez de Cordova, sailed with three vessels to one of the neighbouring Bahama Isles in quest of Indian slaves. He encountered a succession of heavy

gales which drove him far out of his course, and at the end of three weeks he found himself on a strange and unknown coast. Cordova had landed at the N.E. end of the peninsula at Cape Catoche. He was astonished at the size and solid materials of the buildings constructed of stone and lime, . . . also with the higher cultivation of the soil, with the delicate texture of the cotton garments, and the gold ornaments of the natives. The reports he brought back of the country, and still more the specimens of curiously wrought gold, convinced Velasquez of the importance of the discovery, and he prepared with all despatch to avail himself of it. He accordingly fitted out a little squadron of four vessels for the newly discovered lands, and placed it under the command of his nephew Juan de Grijalva, a man on whose probity, prudence, and attachment to himself he knew he could rely. At the Rio de Vandas, "River of Banners," Grijalva had the first communication with the Mexicans themselves. They interchanged presents, and the Spaniards had the satisfaction of receiving for a few worthless toys and trinkets, a rich treasure of jewels, gold ornaments, and vessels of the most fantastic forms and workmanship.

When Alvarado, one of Grijalva's captains sent on ahead, had returned to Cuba with this golden freight, and the accounts of the rich empire of Mexico which he had gathered from the natives, the heart of the governor swelled with rapture as he saw his dreams of avarice and ambition so likely to be realized. Impatient of the long absence of Grijalva, he despatched a vessel in

search of him under the command of Olid, a cavalier who took an important part afterwards in the Conquest. Finally he resolved to fit out another armament on a sufficient scale to insure the subjugation of the country. He accordingly began his preparations for the armament, and, first of all, endeavoured to find a suitable person to share the expense of it and to take the command. Such a person he found, after some difficulty and delay, in Hernando Cortés; the man of all others best calculated to achieve this great enterprise,—the last man to whom Velasquez, could he have foreseen the results, would have confided it.

CORTÉS AND HIS EXPEDITION

HERNANDO CORTÉS was born at Medellin, a town in the south-east corner of Estremadura, in 1485. He came of an ancient and respectable family; and historians have gratified the national vanity by tracing it up to the Lombard kings, whose descendants crossed the Pyrenees and established themselves in Aragon under the Gothic monarchy. This royal genealogy was not found out till Cortés had acquired a name which would confer distinction on any descent, however noble. His father, Martin Cortés de Monroy, was a captain of infantry, in moderate circumstances, but a man of unblemished honour; and both he and his wife, Doña Catalina Pizarro Altamirano, appear to have been much regarded for their excellent qualities.

He was nineteen years of age when he bade adieu to his native shores in 1504,—the same

year in which Spain lost the best and greatest in her long line of princes, Isabella the Catholic. Immediately on landing at Hispaniola, Cortés repaired to the house of the governor, to whom he had been personally known in Spain. Ovando was absent on an expedition into the interior, but the young man was kindly received by the secretary, who assured him there would be no doubt of his obtaining a liberal grant of land to settle on. "But I came to get gold," replied Cortés, "not to till the soil, like a peasant."

On the governor's return, Cortés consented to give up his roving thoughts, at least for a time, as the other laboured to convince him that he would be more likely to realize his wishes from the slow, indeed, but sure, returns of husbandry, where the soil and the labourers were a free gift to the planter, than by taking his chance in the lottery of adventure, in which there were so many blanks to a prize. He accordingly received a grant of land with a *repartimiento* of Indians, and was appointed notary of the town or settlement of Acua. He occasionally, however, found the means of breaking up the monotony of his way of life by engaging in the military expeditions which, under the command of Ovando's lieutenant, Diego Velasquez, were employed to suppress the insurrections of the natives. In this school the young adventurer first studied the wild tactics of Indian warfare; he became familiar with toil and danger, and with those deeds of cruelty which have too often, alas! stained the bright scutcheons of the Castilian chivalry in the New World. He was only prevented by illness—a most fortunate

one, on this occasion—from embarking in Nicuesa's expedition, which furnished a tale of woe not often matched in the annals of Spanish discovery. Providence reserved him for higher ends.

At length, in 1511, when Velasquez undertook the conquest of Cuba, Cortés willingly abandoned his quiet life for the stirring scenes there opened, and took part in the expedition. He displayed, throughout the invasion, an activity and courage that won him the approbation of the commander; while his free and cordial manners, his good humour and lively sallies of wit, made him the favourite of the soldiers.

Such was the state of things, when Alvarado returned with the tidings of Grijalva's discoveries and the rich fruits of his traffic with the natives. The news spread like wildfire throughout the island; for all saw in it the promise of more important results than any hitherto obtained. The governor, as already noticed, resolved to follow up the track of discovery with a more considerable armament; and he looked around for a proper person to share the expense of it and to take the command.

Several hidalgos presented themselves, whom, from want of proper qualifications, or from his distrust of their assuming an independence of their employer, he, one after another, rejected. There were two persons in St Jago in whom he placed great confidence,—Amador de Lares, the *contador*, or royal treasurer, and his own secretary, Andres de Duero. Cortés was also in close intimacy with both these persons; and he availed himself of it to prevail on them to recommend him

as a suitable person to be entrusted with the expedition. It is said he reinforced the proposal by promising a liberal share of the proceeds of it. Velasquez lent a willing ear, therefore, to the recommendation of his counsellors, and, sending for Cortés, announced his purpose of making him Captain-General of the Armada.

From this hour the deportment of Cortés seemed to undergo a change. His thoughts, instead of evaporating in empty levities or idle flashes of merriment, were wholly concentrated on the great object to which he was devoted. His elastic spirits were shown in cheering and stimulating the companions of his toilsome duties, and he was roused to a generous enthusiasm, of which even those who knew him best had not conceived him capable. He applied at once all the money in his possession to fitting out the armament. He raised more by the mortgage of his estates, and by giving his obligations to some wealthy merchants of the place, who relied for their reimbursement on the success of the expedition; and, when his own credit was exhausted, he availed himself of that of his friends.

The funds thus acquired he expended in the purchase of vessels, provisions, and military stores, while he invited recruits by offers of assistance to such as were too poor to provide for themselves, and by the additional promise of a liberal share of the anticipated profits.

All was now bustle and excitement in the little town of St Jago. Some were busy in refitting the vessels and getting them ready for the voyage; some in providing naval stores; others in converting their own estates into money in order to equip

themselves; everyone seemed anxious to contribute in some way or other to the success of the expedition. Six ships, some of them of a large size, had already been procured; and three hundred recruits enrolled themselves in the course of a few days, eager to seek their fortunes under the banner of this daring and popular chieftain.

How far the governor contributed towards the expenses of the outfit is not very clear. If the friends of Cortés are to be believed, nearly the whole burden fell on him; since, while he supplied the squadron without remuneration, the governor sold many of his own stores at an exorbitant profit. Yet it does not seem probable that Velasquez, with such ample means at his command, should have thrown on his deputy the burden of the expedition, nor that the latter—had he done so—could have been in a condition to meet these expenses, amounting, as we are told, to more than twenty thousand gold ducats.

The importance given to Cortés by his new position, and, perhaps, a somewhat more lofty bearing, gradually gave uneasiness to the naturally suspicious temper of Velasquez, who became apprehensive that his officer, when away where he would have the power, might also have the inclination, to throw off his dependence on him altogether.

There were not wanting persons about his Excellency who fanned the latent embers of jealousy into a blaze. These worthy gentlemen, some of them kinsmen of Velasquez, who probably felt their own deserts somewhat thrown into the shade by the rising fortunes of Cortés, reminded

the governor of his ancient quarrel with that officer, and of the little probability that affronts so keenly felt at the time could ever be forgotten. By these and similar suggestions, and by misconstructions of the present conduct of Cortés, they wrought on the passions of Velasquez to such a degree that he resolved to entrust the expedition to other hands.

He communicated his design to his confidential advisers, Lares and Duero, and these trusty personages reported it without delay to Cortés, although, "to a man of half his penetration," says Las Casas, "the thing would have been readily divined from the governor's altered demeanour." The two functionaries advised their friend to expedite matters as much as possible, and to lose no time in getting his fleet ready for sea.

He had not yet got his complement of men, nor of vessels, and was very inadequately provided with supplies of any kind. But he resolved to weigh anchor that very night. He waited on his officers, informed them of his purpose, and probably of the cause of it; and at midnight, when the town was hushed in sleep, they all went quietly on board, and the little squadron dropped down the bay. First, however, Cortés had visited the person whose business it was to supply the place with meat, and relieved him of all his stock on hand.

Great was the amazement of the good citizens of St Jago when at dawn, they saw that the fleet, which they knew was so ill-prepared for the voyage, had left its moorings and was busily getting under way. The tidings soon came to

the ears of his Excellency, who, springing from his bed, hastily dressed himself, mounted his horse, and, followed by his retinue, galloped down to the quay. Cortés, as soon as he descried their approach, entered an armed boat, and came within speaking-distance of the shore. "And is it thus you part from me?" exclaimed Velasquez; "a courteous way of taking leave, truly!" "Pardon me," answered Cortés; "time presses, and there are some things that should be done before they are even thought of. Has your Excellency any commands?" But the mortified governor had no commands to give, and Cortés politely waving his hand, returned to his vessel, and the little fleet instantly made sail for Macaca.

From Macaca, where Cortés laid in such stores as he could obtain from the royal farms, and which, he said, he considered as "a loan from the king," he proceeded to Trinidad; a more considerable town, on the southern coast of Cuba. Here he landed, and, erecting his standard in front of his quarters, made proclamation, with liberal offers to all who would join the expedition. Volunteers came in daily, and among them more than a hundred of Grijalva's men, just returned from their voyage and willing to follow up the discovery under an enterprising leader. The fame of Cortés attracted, also, a number of cavaliers of family and distinction, some of whom, having accompanied Grijalva, brought much information valuable for the present expedition. Among these hidalgos may be mentioned Pedro de Alvarado and his brothers, Cristóval de Olid, Alonso de Avila, Juan Velasquez de Leon, a near relation of the

governor, Alonso Hernandez de Puertocarrero, and Gonzalo de Sandoval,—all of them men who took a most important part in the Conquest. Their presence was of great moment, as giving consideration to the enterprise; and, when they entered the little camp of the adventurers, the latter turned out to welcome them amidst lively strains of music and joyous salvos of artillery.

Cortés was at this time thirty-three or perhaps thirty-four years of age. In stature he was rather above the middle size. His complexion was pale; and his large dark eye gave an expression of gravity to his countenance, not to have been expected in one of his cheerful temperament. His figure was slender, at least until later life; but his chest was deep, his shoulders broad, his frame muscular and well-proportioned. It presented the union of agility and vigour which qualified him to excel in fencing, horsemanship, and the other generous exercises of chivalry. In his diet he was temperate, careless of what he ate, and drinking little; while to toil and privation he seemed perfectly indifferent. His dress, for he did not disdain the impression produced by such adventitious aids, was such as to set off his handsome person to advantage. His manner, frank and soldier-like, concealed a most cool and calculating spirit.

Accordingly, on the 10th of February 1519, the little squadron got under way, and directed its course towards Cape St Antonio, the appointed place of rendezvous. When all were brought together, the vessels were found to be eleven in number; one of them, in which Cortés himself went, was of a hundred tons burden, three others

were from seventy to eighty tons; the remainder were caravels and open brigantines. The whole was put under the direction of Antonio de Alaminos, as chief pilot; a veteran navigator, who had acted as pilot to Columbus in his last voyage, and to Cordova and Grijalva in the former expeditions to Yucatan.

Landing on the Cape and mustering his forces, Cortés found they amounted to one hundred and ten mariners, five hundred and fifty-three soldiers, including thirty-two cross-bowmen, and thirteen arquebusiers, besides two hundred Indians of the island, and a few Indian women for menial offices. He was provided with ten heavy guns, four lighter pieces called falconets, and with a good supply of ammunition. He had besides sixteen horses. They were not easily procured; for the difficulty of transporting them across the ocean in the flimsy craft of that day made them rare and incredibly dear in the Islands. But Cortés rightfully estimated the importance of cavalry, however small in number, both for their actual service in the field, and for striking terror into the savages.

Before embarking, Cortés addressed his soldiers in a short but animated harangue. He told them they were about to enter on a noble enterprise, one that would make their name famous to after-ages. He was leading them to countries more vast and opulent than any yet visited by Europeans. "I hold out to you a glorious prize," said the orator, "but it is to be won by incessant toil. Great things are achieved only by great exertions and glory was never the reward of sloth."

The rough eloquence of the general, touching the various chords of ambition, avarice, and religious zeal, sent a thrill through the bosoms of his martial audience; and, receiving it with acclamations, they seemed eager to press forward under a chief who was to lead them not so much to battle, as to triumph.

Cortés was well satisfied to find his own enthusiasm so largely shared by his followers. Mass was then celebrated with the solemnities usual with the Spanish navigators when entering on their voyages of discovery. The fleet was placed under the immediate protection of St Peter, the patron saint of Cortés, and, weighing anchor, took its departure on the eighteenth day of February 1519 for the coast of Yucatan.

FIRST INTERCOURSE BETWEEN CORTÉS AND THE MEXICANS: MARINA

THE fleet had now arrived off San Juan de Ulua. The weather was temperate and serene and crowds of natives were gathered on the shore of the mainland gazing at the strange phenomenon as the vessels glided along under easy sail on the smooth bosom of the waters. The air came pleasantly off the shore, and Cortés, liking the spot, thought he might safely anchor under the lee of the island. The ships had not been long at anchor when a light pirogue (Indian canoe) filled with natives, shot off from the neighbouring continent, and steered for the general's vessel, distinguished by the royal ensign of Castile floating from the mast. The Indians came on board

with a frank confidence, inspired by the accounts of the Spaniards spread by their countrymen who had traded with Grijalva. They brought presents of fruits and flowers and little ornaments of gold, which they gladly exchanged for the usual trinkets. Cortés was baffled in his attempts to hold a conversation with his visitors by means of the interpreter, Aguilar, who was ignorant of the language; the Mayan dialects, with which he was conversant, bearing too little resemblance to the Aztec. In this dilemma, he was informed that one of the female slaves recently given to him by the Tabascan chiefs was a native Mexican, and understood the language. Her name—that given to her by the Spaniards—was Marina; and, as she was to exercise a most important influence on their fortunes, it is necessary to acquaint the reader with something of her character and history.

She was born at Painalla, in the province of Coatzacoalco, on the south-eastern borders of the Mexican empire. Her father, a rich and powerful cacique, died when she was very young. Her mother married again, and, having a son, she conceived the infamous idea of securing to this offspring of her second union Marina's rightful inheritance. She accordingly feigned that the latter was dead, but secretly delivered her into the hands of some itinerant traders of Xicallanco. By the merchants the Indian maiden was again sold to the cacique of Tabasco, who delivered her, as we have seen, to the Spaniards.

From the place of her birth, she was well acquainted with the Mexican tongue, which,

indeed, she is said to have spoken with great elegance. Her residence in Tabasco familiarized her with the dialects of that country, so that she could carry on a conversation with Aguilar, which he in turn rendered into the Castilian. Thus a certain though somewhat circuitous channel was opened to Cortés for communicating with the Aztecs; a circumstance of the last importance to the success of his enterprise. It was not very long, however, before Marina, who had a lively genius, made herself so far mistress of the Castilian as to supersede the necessity of any other linguist. She learned it the more readily, as it was to her the language of love.

Cortés, who appreciated the value of her services from the first, made her his interpreter, then his secretary, and, won by her charms, his mistress. She had a son by him, Don Martin Cortés, *comendador* of the Military Order of St James, less distinguished by his birth than his unmerited persecutions.

Marina was at this time in the morning of life. She is said to have possessed uncommon personal attractions, and her open, expressive features indicated her generous temper. She always remained faithful to the countrymen of her adoption; and her knowledge of the language and customs of the Mexicans, and often of their designs, enabled her to extricate the Spaniards, more than once, from the most embarrassing and perilous situations. All agree that she was full of excellent qualities, and the important services which she rendered the Spaniards have made her memory deservedly dear to them; while the name

of Malinche—the name by which she is still known in Mexico—was pronounced with kindness by the conquered races, with whose misfortunes she showed an invariable sympathy.

With the aid of his two intelligent interpreters, Cortés entered into conversation with his Indian visitors. He learned that they were Mexicans, or rather subjects of the great Mexican empire, of which their own province formed one of the comparatively recent conquests. The country was ruled by a powerful monarch, called Mochtezuma, or by Europeans more commonly Montezuma, who dwelt on the mountain plains of the interior, nearly seventy leagues from the coast; their own province was governed by one of his nobles. He dismissed them loaded with presents, having first ascertained that there was abundance of gold in the interior. The natives also flocked in, bringing them fruits, game, vegetables, and dishes cooked after the fashion of the country. From some of the visitors Cortés learned the intention of the Cacique Teuhtlile to visit him on the following day.

This was Easter. Teuhtlile arrived, as he had announced, before noon. He was attended by a numerous train, and was met by Cortés, who conducted him with much ceremony to his tent, where his principal officers were assembled. The Aztec chief returned their salutations with polite though formal courtesy. Mass was first said by Father Olmedo, and the service was listened to by Teuhtlile and his attendants with decent reverence. A collation was afterwards served, at which the general entertained his guest with Spanish wines

and confections. The interpreters were then introduced, and a conversation commenced between the parties.

The first inquiries of Teuhtlile were respecting the country of the strangers and the purport of their visit. Cortés told him that "he was the subject of a potent monarch beyond the seas, who ruled over an immense empire, and had kings and princes for his vassals; that, acquainted with the greatness of the Mexican emperor, his master had desired to enter into a communication with him, and had sent him as his envoy to wait on Montezuma with a present in token of his goodwill, and a message which he must deliver in person." He concluded by inquiring of Teuhtlile when he could be admitted to his sovereign's presence.

To this the Aztec noble somewhat haughtily replied, "How is it that you have been here only two days, and demand to see the Emperor?" He then added, with more courtesy, that "he was surprised to learn there was another monarch as powerful as Montezuma, but that, if it were so, he had no doubt his master would be happy to communicate with him. He would send his couriers with the royal gift brought by the Spanish commander, and, so soon as he had learned Montezuma's will, would communicate it."

Teuhtlile then commanded his slaves to bring forward the present intended for the Spanish general. It consisted of ten loads of fine cottons, several mantles of that curious feather-work whose rich and delicate dyes might vie with the most beautiful painting, and a wicker basket filled with ornaments of wrought gold, all calculated to

inspire the Spaniards with high ideas of the wealth and mechanical ingenuity of the Mexicans.

Cortés received these presents with suitable acknowledgments, and ordered his own attendants to lay before the chief the articles designed for Montezuma. These were an armchair richly carved and painted, a crimson cap of cloth, having a gold medal emblazoned with St George and the dragon, and a quantity of collars, bracelets, and other ornaments of cut glass, which, in a country where glass was not to be had, might claim to have the value of real gems, and no doubt pass for such with the inexperienced Mexican. Teuhtlile observed a soldier in the camp with a shining gilt helmet on his head, which he said reminded him of one worn by the god Quetzalcoatl in Mexico; and he showed a desire that Montezuma should see it. The coming of the Spaniards, as the reader will soon see, was associated with some traditions of this same deity. Cortés expressed his willingness that the casque should be sent to the emperor, intimating a hope that it would be returned filled with the gold dust of the country, that he might be able to compare its quality with that of his own! He further told the governor, as we are informed by his chaplain, "that the Spaniards were troubled with a disease of the heart, for which gold was a specific remedy!" "In short," says Las Casas, "he contrived to make his want of gold very clear to the governor."

While these things were passing, Cortés observed one of Teuhtlile's attendants busy with a pencil, apparently delineating some object. On looking at his work, he found that it was a sketch

on canvas of the Spaniards, their costumes, arms, and in short different objects of interest, giving to each its appropriate form and colour. This was the celebrated picture-writing of the Aztecs, and as Teuhtlile informed him, this man was employed in portraying the various objects for the eye of Montezuma, who would thus gather a more vivid notion of their appearance than from any description by words. Cortés was pleased with the idea; and, as he knew how much the effect would be heightened by converting still life into action, he ordered out the cavalry on the beach, the wet sands of which afforded a firm footing for the horses. The bold and rapid movements of the troops, as they went through their military exercises; the apparent ease with which they managed the fiery animals on which they were mounted; the glancing of their weapons, and the shrill cry of the trumpet, all filled the spectators with astonishment; but when they heard the thunders of the cannon, which Cortés ordered to be fired at the same time, and witnessed the volumes of smoke and flame issuing from these terrible engines, and the rushing sound of the balls, as they dashed through the trees of the neighbouring forest, shivering their branches into fragments, they were filled with consternation, from which the Aztec chief himself was not wholly free.

Nothing of all this was lost on the painters, who faithfully recorded, after their fashion, every particular; not omitting the ships,—“the water-houses,” as they called them, of the strangers,—which, with their dark hulls and snow-white sails reflected from the water, were swinging lazily at

anchor on the calm bosom of the bay. All was depicted with a fidelity that excited in their turn the admiration of the Spaniards, who, doubtless, unprepared for this exhibition of skill, greatly overestimated the merits of the execution.

MONTEZUMA THE MEXICAN OR AZTEC EMPEROR

AT the time of the arrival of the wonderful strangers on the coast, the Aztec throne was filled by Montezuma the Second, nephew of the last and grandson of a preceding monarch. He had been elected to the royal dignity in 1502 in preference to his brothers for his superior qualifications both as a soldier and priest. In early youth he had taken an active part in the wars of the Empire, though of late he had devoted himself more exclusively to the services of the temple; and he was scrupulous in his attentions to all the burdensome ceremonial of the Aztec worship.

Montezuma displayed all the energy and enterprise in the commencement of his reign which had been anticipated from him. His first expedition against a rebel province in the neighbourhood was crowned with success, and he led back in triumph a throng of captives for the bloody sacrifice that was to grace his coronation. This was celebrated with uncommon pomp. Games and religious ceremonies continued for several days, and among the spectators who flocked from distant quarters were some noble Tlascalans, the hereditary enemies of Mexcio. They were in disguise, hoping thus to elude detection. They were re-

cognised, however, and reported to the monarch. But he only availed himself of the information to provide them with honourable entertainment and a good place for witnessing the games. This was a magnanimous act, considering the long-cherished hostility between the nations.

In his first years, Montezuma was constantly engaged in war, and frequently led his armies in person. The Aztec banners were seen in the farthest provinces on the Gulf of Mexico, and the distant regions of Nicaragua and Honduras. The expeditions were generally successful; and the limits of the empire were more widely extended than at any preceding period.

Meanwhile the monarch was not inattentive to the interior concerns of the kingdom. He made some important changes in the courts of justice, and carefully watched over the execution of the laws, which he enforced with stern severity. He was in the habit of patrolling the streets of his capital in disguise, to make himself personally acquainted with the abuses in it. And with more questionable policy, it is said, he would sometimes try the integrity of his judges by tempting them with large bribes to swerve from their duty, and then called the delinquent to strict account for yielding to the temptation.

He liberally recompensed all who served him. He showed a similar munificent spirit in his public works, constructing and embellishing the temples, bringing water into the capital by a new channel, and establishing a hospital, or retreat for invalid soldiers, in the city of Colhuacan.

These acts, so worthy of a great prince, were

counterbalanced by others of an opposite complexion. The humility, displayed so ostentatiously before his elevation, gave way to an intolerable arrogance. In his pleasure-houses, domestic establishment, and way of living, he assumed a pomp unknown to his predecessors. He secluded himself from public observation, or, when he went abroad, exacted the most slavish homage; while in the palace he would be served only, even in the most menial offices, by persons of rank. He, further, dismissed several plebeians, chiefly poor soldiers of merit, from the places they had occupied near the person of his predecessor, considering their attendance a dishonour to royalty. It was in vain that his oldest and sagest counsellors remonstrated on a conduct so impolitic.

While he thus disgusted his subjects by his haughty deportment, he alienated their affections by the imposition of grievous taxes. These were demanded by the lavish expenditure of his court. They fell with peculiar heaviness on the conquered cities. This oppression led to frequent insurrection and resistance; and the latter years of his reign present a scene of unintermitting hostility, in which the forces of one half of the empire were employed in suppressing the commotions of the other. Unfortunately, there was no principle of amalgamation by which the new acquisitions could be incorporated into the ancient monarchy as parts of one whole. Their interests, as well as sympathies, were different.

In a preceding chapter I have noticed the popular traditions respecting Quetzalcoatl, that

deity with a fair complexion and flowing beard, so unlike the Indian physiognomy, who, after fulfilling his mission of benevolence among the Aztecs, embarked on the Atlantic Sea for the mysterious shores of Tlapallan. He promised, on his departure, to return at some future day with his posterity, and resume the possession of his empire. That day was looked forward to with hope or with apprehension, according to the interest of the believer, but with general confidence, throughout the wide borders of Anahuac. Even after the Conquest it still lingered among the Indian races, by whom it was as fondly cherished as the advent of their king Sebastian continued to be by the Portuguese, or that of the Messiah by the Jews.

A general feeling seems to have prevailed in the time of Montezuma that the period for the return of the deity and the full accomplishment of his promise was near at hand. This conviction is said to have gained ground from various preternatural occurrences, reported with more or less detail by all the most ancient historians, was said to foreshadow the downfall of the Empire.

When tidings were brought to the capital of the landing of Grijalva on the coast, in the preceding year, the heart of Montezuma was filled with dismay. He felt as if the destinies which had so long brooded over the royal line of Mexico were to be accomplished, and the sceptre was to pass away from his house for ever. Though somewhat relieved by the departure of the Spaniards, he caused sentinels to be stationed on the heights, and, when the Europeans returned

under Cortés, he doubtless received the earliest notice of the unwelcome event. It was by his orders, however, that the provincial governor had prepared so hospitable a reception for them. The hieroglyphical report of these strange visitors, now forwarded to the capital, revived all his apprehensions. He called, without delay, a meeting of his principal counsellors, including the kings of Tezcuco and Tlacopan, and laid the matter before them.

There seems to have been much division of opinion in that body. Some were for resisting the strangers at once, whether by fraud or by open force. Others contended that, if they were supernatural beings, fraud and force would be alike useless. If they were, as they pretended, ambassadors from a foreign prince, such a policy would be cowardly and unjust. That they were not of the family of Quetzalcoatl was argued from the fact that they had shown themselves hostile to his religion ; for tidings of the proceedings of the Spaniards in Tabasco, it seems, had already reached the capital. Among those in favour of giving them a friendly and honourable reception was the Tezcucan king, Cacama.

But Montezuma, taking counsel of his own ill-defined apprehensions, preferred a half-way course—as usual, the most impolitic. He resolved to send an embassy, with such a magnificent present to the strangers as should impress them with high ideas of his grandeur and resources ; while at the same time he would forbid their approach to the capital. This was to reveal at once both his wealth and his weakness.

CORTÉS BURNS HIS BOATS

THE arrangements being now finally settled at the Villa Rica, Cortés sent forward Alvarado, with a large part of the army, to Cempoalla, where he soon after joined them with the remainder. The late affair of the conspiracy to return home seems to have made a deep impression on his mind. It showed him that there were timid spirits in the camp on whom he could not rely, and who he feared might spread the seeds of disaffection among their companions. Even the more resolute, on any occasion of disgust or disappointment hereafter, might falter in purpose, and, getting possession of the vessels, abandon the enterprise. This was already too vast, and the odds were too formidable, to authorise expectation of success with diminution of numbers. Experience showed that this was always to be apprehended while means of escape were at hand. The best chance for success was to cut off these means. He came to the daring resolution to destroy the fleet, without the knowledge of his army.

When arrived at Cempoalla, he communicated his design to a few of his devoted adherents, who entered warmly into his views. Through them he readily persuaded the pilots, by means of those golden arguments which weigh more than any other with ordinary minds, to make such a report of the condition of the fleet as suited his purpose. The ships, they said, were grievously racked by the heavy gales they had encountered,

and, what was worse, the worms had eaten into their sides and bottoms until most of them were not seaworthy, and some, indeed, could scarcely now be kept afloat.

Cortés received the communication with surprise; "for he could well dissemble," observes Las Casas, with his usual friendly comment, "when it suited his interests." "If it be so," he exclaimed, "we must make the best of it! Heaven's will be done!" He then ordered five of the worst conditioned to be dismantled, their cordage, sails, iron, and whatever was movable, to be brought on shore, and the ships to be sunk. A survey was made of the others, and, on a similar report, four more were condemned in the same manner. Only one small vessel remained!

When the intelligence reached the troops in Cempoalla, it caused the deepest consternation. They saw themselves cut off by a single blow from friends, family, country! The stoutest hearts quailed before the prospect of being thus abandoned on a hostile shore, a handful of men arrayed against a formidable empire. When the news arrived of the destruction of the five vessels first condemned, they had acquiesced in it as a necessary measure, knowing the mischievous activity of the insects in these tropical seas. But, when this was followed by the loss of the remaining four, suspicions of the truth flashed on their minds. They felt they were betrayed. Murmurs, at first deep, swelled louder and louder, menacing open mutiny. "Their general," they said, "had led them like cattle to be butchered in the shambles!" The affair wore

a most alarming aspect. In no situation was Cortés ever exposed to greater danger from his soldiers.

His presence of mind did not desert him at this crisis. He called his men together, and, employing the tones of persuasion rather than authority, assured them that a survey of the ships showed they were not fit for service. *If he had ordered them to be destroyed, they should consider, also, that his was the greatest sacrifice, for they were his property,—all, indeed, he possessed in the world.* The troops, on the other hand, would derive one great advantage from it, by the addition of a hundred able-bodied recruits, before required to man the vessels. But, even if the fleet had been saved, it could have been of little service in their present expedition; since they would not need it if they succeeded, while they would be too far in the interior to profit by it if they failed. He besought them to turn their thoughts in another direction. To be thus calculating chances and means of escape was unworthy of brave souls. They had set their hands to the work; to look back, as they advanced, would be their ruin. They had only to resume their former confidence in themselves and their general, and success was certain. “As for me,” he concluded, “I have chosen my part. I will remain here while there is one to bear me company. If there be any so craven as to shrink from sharing the dangers of our glorious enterprise, let them go home, in God’s name. There is still one vessel left. Let them take that and return to Cuba. They can tell there

how they deserted their commander and their comrades, and patiently wait till we return loaded with the spoils of the Aztecs."

The politic orator had touched the right chord in the bosoms of the soldiers. As he spoke, their resentment gradually died away. The faded visions of future riches and glory, rekindled by his eloquence, again floated before their imaginations. The first shock over, they felt ashamed of their temporary distrust. The enthusiasm for their leader revived, for they felt that under his banner only could they hope for victory; and as he concluded they testified to the revulsion of their feelings by making the air ring with their shouts "To Mexico! to Mexico!"

TWO DESPERATE BATTLES WITH THE TLASCALANS

THE Tlascalans belonged to the same great family with the Aztecs. They came on the grand plateau about the same time with the kindred races, at the close of the twelfth century, and planted themselves on the western borders of the lake of Tezcuco. Here they remained many years, engaged in the usual pursuits of a bold and partially civilized people. From some cause or other, perhaps their turbulent temper, they incurred the enmity of surrounding tribes. A coalition was formed against them; and a bloody battle was fought on the plains of Poyauhtlan, in which the Tlascalans were completely victorious.

Disgusted, however, with their residence among nations with whom they found so little favour,

the conquering people resolved to migrate. They separated into three divisions, the largest of which, taking a southern course by the great *volcan* of Mexico, wound round the ancient city of Cholula, and finally settled in the district of country overshadowed by the sierra of Tlascala. The warm and fruitful valleys, locked up in the embraces of this rugged brotherhood of mountains, afforded means of subsistence for an agricultural people, while the bold eminences of the sierra presented secure positions for their towns.

The nation, agricultural in its habits, reserved its highest honours, like most other rude—unhappily, also, civilized—nations, for military prowess. Public games were instituted, and prizes decreed to those who excelled in such manly and athletic exercises as might train them for the fatigues of war. Triumphs were granted to the victorious general, who entered the city, leading his spoils and captives in long procession, while his achievements were commemorated in national songs, and his effigy, whether in wood or stone, was erected in the temples. It was truly in the martial spirit of republican Rome.

An institution not unlike knighthood was introduced, very similar to one existing also among the Aztecs. The aspirant to the honours of this barbaric chivalry watched his arms and fasted fifty or sixty days in the temple, then listened to a grave discourse on the duties of his new profession. Various whimsical ceremonies followed, when his arms were restored to him; he was led in solemn procession through the public streets, and the inauguration was concluded by banquets and

public rejoicings. The new knight was distinguished henceforth by certain peculiar privileges, as well as by a badge intimating his rank. It is worthy of remark that this honour was not reserved exclusively for military merit, but was the recompense, also, of public services of other kinds, as wisdom in council, or sagacity and success in trade. For trade was held in as high estimation by the Tlascalans as by the other people of Anahuac.

This was the nation Cortés was now about to meet. The Spaniards came in sight of a body of Indians, about a thousand, apparently, all armed, and brandishing their weapons, as the Christians approached, in token of defiance. Cortés, when he had come within hearing, ordered the interpreters to proclaim that he had no hostile intentions, but wished only to be allowed a passage through their country, which he had entered as a friend. This declaration he commanded the royal notary, Godoy, to record on the spot, that, if blood were shed, it might not be charged on the Spaniards. This pacific proclamation was met, as usual on such occasions, by a shower of darts, stones, and arrows, which fell like rain on the Spaniards, rattling on their stout harness, and in some instances penetrating to the skin. Galled by the smart of their wounds, they called on the general to lead them on, till he sounded the well-known battle-cry, "St Jago, and at them!"

The Indians maintained their ground for a while with spirit, when they retreated with precipitation, but not in disorder. The Spaniards, whose blood was heated by the encounter, followed

up their advantage with more zeal than prudence, suffering the wily enemy to draw them into a narrow glen or defile intersected by a little stream of water, where the broken ground was impracticable for artillery, as well as for the movements of cavalry. Pressing forward with eagerness, to extricate themselves from their perilous position, to their great dismay, on turning an abrupt angle of the pass, they came in presence of a numerous army, choking up the gorge of the valley, and stretching far over the plains beyond. To the astonished eyes of Cortés, they appeared a hundred thousand men, while no account estimates them at less than thirty thousand.

They presented a confused assemblage of helmets, weapons, and many coloured plumes, glancing bright in the morning sun, and mingled with banners, above which proudly floated one that bore as a device the heron on a rock. It was the well-known ensign of the house of Titcala, and, as well as the white and yellow stripes on the bodies, and the like colours on the feather-mail of the Indians, showed that they were the warriors of Xicotencatl.

As the Spaniards came in sight, the Tlascalans set up a hideous war-cry, or rather whistle, piercing the ear with its shrillness, and which, with the beat of their melancholy drums, that could be heard for half a league or more, might well have filled the stoutest heart with dismay. This formidable host came rolling on towards the Christians, as if to overwhelm them by their very numbers. But the courageous band of warriors, closely ~~serried~~ ^{serried} together and sheltered under their

strong panoplies, received the shock unshaken, while the broken masses of the enemy, chafing and heaving tumultuously around them, seemed to recede only to return with new and accumulated force.

Cortés, as usual, in the front of danger, in vain endeavoured, at the head of the horse, to open a passage for the infantry. Still his men, both cavalry and foot, kept their array unbroken, offering no assailable point to their foe. A body of the Tlascalans, however, acting in concert, assaulted a soldier named Moran, one of the best riders in the troop. They succeeded in dragging him from his horse, which they despatched with a thousand blows. The Spaniards, on foot, made a desperate effort to rescue their comrade from the hands of the enemy,—and from the horrible doom of the captive. A fierce struggle now began over the body of the prostrate horse. Ten of the Spaniards were wounded, when they succeeded in retrieving the unfortunate cavalier from his assailants, but in so disastrous a plight that he died on the following day. The horse was borne off in triumph by the Indians, and his mangled remains were sent, a strange trophy, to the different towns of Tlascala. The circumstance troubled the Spanish commander, as it divested the animal of the supernatural terrors with which the superstition of the natives had usually surrounded it. To prevent such a consequence, he had caused the two horses, killed on the preceding day, to be secretly buried on the spot.

The enemy now began to give ground gradually, borne down by the riders, and trampled under

the hoofs of their horses. Through the whole of this sharp encounter the Indian allies were of great service to the Spaniards. They rushed into the water, and grappled their enemies, with the desperation of men who felt that "their only safety was in the despair of safety." "I see nothing but death for us," exclaimed a Cempoallan chief to Marina; "we shall never get through the pass alive." "The God of the Christians is with us," answered the intrepid woman; "and He will carry us safely through."

Amidst the din of battle, the voice of Cortés was heard, cheering on his soldiers. "If we fail now," he cried, "the Cross of Christ can never be planted in the land. Forward, comrades! When was it ever known that a Castilian turned his back on a foe?" Animated by the words and heroic bearing of their general, the soldiers, with desperate efforts, at length succeeded in forcing a passage through the dark columns of the enemy, and emerged from the defile on the open plain beyond.

Here they quickly recovered their confidence with their superiority. The horse soon opened a space for the manœuvres of the artillery. The close files of their antagonists presented a sure mark; and the thunders of the ordnance vomiting forth torrents of fire and sulphurous smoke, the wide desolation caused in their ranks and the strangely mangled carcasses of the slain, filled the barbarians with consternation and horror. They had no weapons to cope with these terrible engines, and their clumsy missiles, discharged from uncertain hands, seemed to fall ineffectual on the

charmed heads of the Christians. What added to their embarrassment was, the desire to carry off the dead and wounded from the field, a general practice among the people of Anahuac, but one which necessarily exposed them, while thus employed, to still greater loss.

Eight of their principal chiefs had now fallen, and Xicotencatl, the Tlascalan general, finding himself wholly unable to make head against the Spaniards in the open field, ordered a retreat. Far from the confusion of a panic-struck mob, so common among barbarians, the Tlascalan force moved off the ground with all the order of a well-disciplined army. Cortés, as on the preceding day, was too well satisfied with his present advantage to desire to follow it up. It was within an hour of sunset, and he was anxious before nightfall to secure a good position, where he might refresh his wounded troops and bivouac for the night.

* * * *

The second engagement, fought three days later, was the more serious of the two. As the battle was now inevitable, Cortés resolved to march out and meet the enemy in the field. This would have a show of confidence that might serve the double purpose of intimidating the Tlascalans and inspiring his own men, whose enthusiasm might lose somewhat of its heat if compelled to await the assault of their antagonists, inactive in their own intrenchments. The sun rose bright on the following morning, the fifth of September 1519, an eventful day in the history of the Spanish Conquest. The general reviewed his army, and

gave them, preparatory to marching, a few words of encouragement and advice. The infantry he instructed to rely on the point rather than the edge of their swords, and to endeavour to thrust their opponents through the body. The horsemen were to charge at half speed, with their lances aimed at the eyes of the Indians. The artillery, the arquebusiers, and crossbowmen were to support one another, some loading while others discharged their pieces, that there should be an unintermitted firing kept up through the action. Above all, they were to maintain their ranks close and unbroken, as on this depended their preservation.

They had not advanced a quarter of a league, when they came in sight of the Tlascalan army. Its dense array stretched far and wide over a vast plain or meadow-ground about six miles square. Its appearance justified the report which had been given of its numbers. Nothing could be more picturesque than the aspect of these Indian battalions, with the naked bodies of the common soldiers gaudily painted, the fantastic helmets of the chiefs glittering with gold and precious stones, and the glowing panoplies of feather-work which decorated their persons. Innumerable spears and darts, tipped with points of transparent *itztli* or fiery copper, sparkled bright in the morning sun, like the phosphoric gleams playing on the surface of a troubled sea, while the rear of the mighty host was dark with the shadows of banners, on which were emblazoned the armorial bearings of the great Tlascalan and Otomi chieftains. Among these, the white heron on the rock, the cognizance

of the house of Xicotencatl, was conspicuous, and, still more, the golden eagle with outspread wings, in the fashion of a Roman *signum*, richly ornamented with emeralds and silver-work, the great standard of the republic of Tlascala.

The common file wore no covering except a girdle round the loins. Their bodies were painted with the appropriate colours of the chieftain whose banner they followed. The feather-mail of the higher class of warriors exhibited, also, a similar selection of colours for the like object, in the same manner as the colour of the tartan indicates the peculiar clan of the Highlander. The caciques and principal warriors were clothed in quilted cotton tunics, two inches thick, which, fitting close to the body, protected also the thighs and the shoulders. Over these the wealthier Indians wore cuirasses of thin gold plate, or silver. Their legs were defended by leathern boots or sandals, trimmed with gold. But the most brilliant part of their costume was a rich mantle of the *plumaje* or feather-work, embroidered with curious art, and furnishing some resemblance to the gorgeous surcoat worn by the European knight over his armour in the Middle Ages. This graceful and picturesque dress was surmounted by a fantastic headpiece made of wood or leather, representing the head of some wild animal, and frequently displaying a formidable array of teeth. With this covering the warrior's head was enveloped, producing a most grotesque and hideous effect. From the crown floated a splendid panache of the richly variegated plumage of the tropics, indicating, by its form and colours, the rank and family of

the wearer. To complete their defensive armour, they carried shields or targets, made sometimes of wood covered with leather, but more usually of a light frame of reeds quilted with cotton, which were preferred, as tougher and less liable to fracture than the former. They had other bucklers, in which the cotton was covered with an elastic substance, enabling them to be shut up in a more compact form, like a fan or umbrella. These shields were decorated with showy ornaments, according to the taste or wealth of the wearer, and fringed with a beautiful pendant of feather-work.

Their weapons were slings, bows and arrows, javelins, and darts. They were accomplished archers, and would discharge two or even three arrows at a time. But they most excelled in throwing the javelin. One species of this, with a thong attached to it, which remained in the slinger's hand, that he might recall the weapon, was especially dreaded by the Spaniards. These various weapons were pointed with bone, or the mineral *itztli* (obsidian), the hard vitreous substance already noticed as capable of taking an edge like a razor, though easily blunted. Their spears and arrows were also frequently headed with copper. Instead of a sword, they bore a two-handed staff, about three feet and a half long, in which, at regular distances, were inserted, transversely, sharp blades of *itztli*,—a formidable weapon, which, an eyewitness assures us, he had seen fell a horse at a blow.

Such was the costume of the Tlascalán warrior, and, indeed, of that great family of nations

generally who occupied the plateau of Anahuac. Some parts of it, as the targets and the cotton mail or *escaupil*, as it was called in Castilian, were so excellent that they were subsequently adopted by the Spaniards, as equally effectual in the way of protection, and superior on the score of lightness and convenience to their own. They were of sufficient strength to turn an arrow or the stroke of a javelin, although impotent as a defence against firearms. But what armour is not? Yet it is probably no exaggeration to say that, in convenience, gracefulness, and strength, the arms of the Indian warrior were not very inferior to those of the polished nations of antiquity.

As soon as the Castilians came in sight, the Tlascalans set up their yell of defiance, rising high above the wild barbaric minstrelsy of shell, atabal, and trumpet, with which they proclaimed their triumphant anticipations of victory over the paltry forces of the invaders. When the latter had come within bowshot, the Indians hurled a tempest of missiles, that darkened the sun for a moment as with a passing cloud, strewing the earth around with heaps of stones and arrows. Slowly and steadily the little band of Spaniards held on its way amidst this arrowy shower, until it had reached what appeared the proper distance for delivering its fire with full effect. Cortés then halted, and, hastily forming his troops, opened a general well-directed fire along the whole line. Every shot bore its errand of death; and the ranks of the Indians were mowed down faster than their comrades in the rear could carry off their bodies, according to custom, from the

field. The balls in their passage through the crowded files, bearing splinters of the broken harness and mangled limbs of the warriors, scattered havoc and desolation in their path. The mob of barbarians stood petrified with dismay, till at length, galled to desperation by their intolerable suffering, they poured forth simultaneously their hideous war-shriek and rushed impetuously on the Christians.

On they came like an avalanche, or mountain torrent, shaking the solid earth and sweeping away every obstacle in its path. The little army of Spaniards opposed a bold front to the overwhelming mass. But no strength could withstand it. They faltered, gave way, were borne along before it, and their ranks were broken and thrown into disorder. It was in vain the general called on them to close again and rally. His voice was drowned by the din of fight and the fierce cries of the assailants. For a moment, it seemed that all was lost. The tide of battle had turned against them, and the fate of the Christians was sealed.

But every man had that within his bosom which spoke louder than the voice of the general. Despair gave unnatural energy to his arm. The naked body of the Indian afforded no resistance to the sharp Toledo steel; and with their good swords the Spanish infantry at length succeeded in staying the human torrent. The heavy guns from a distance thundered on the flank of the assailants, which, shaken by the iron tempest, was thrown into disorder. Their very numbers increased the confusion, as they were precipitated on the masses in front. The horse at the same

moment, charging gallantly under Cortés, followed up the advantage, and at length compelled the tumultuous throng to fall back with greater precipitation and disorder than that with which they had advanced.

More than once in the course of the action a similar assault was attempted by the Tlascalans, but each time with less spirit and greater loss. They were too deficient in military science to profit by their vast superiority in numbers. It was, in short, the combat of the ancient Greeks and Persians over again. Still, the great numerical superiority of the Indians might have enabled them, at a severe cost of their own lives, indeed, to wear out, in time, the constancy of the Spaniards, disabled by wounds and incessant fatigue. But, fortunately for the latter, dissensions arose among their enemies. A Tlascalan chieftain, commanding one of the great divisions, had taken umbrage at the haughty demeanour of Xicotencatl, who had charged him with misconduct or cowardice in the late action. The injured cacique challenged his rival to single combat. This did not take place. But, burning with resentment, he chose the present occasion to indulge it, by drawing off his forces, amounting to ten thousand men, from the field. He also persuaded another of the commanders to follow his example.

Thus reduced to about half his original strength, and that greatly crippled by the losses of the day, Xicotencatl could no longer maintain his ground against the Spaniards. After disputing the field with admirable courage for four hours, he retreated and resigned it to the enemy. The Spaniards

were too much jaded, and too many were disabled by wounds, to allow them to pursue; and Cortés, satisfied with the decisive victory he had gained, returned in triumph to his position on the hill of Tzompach.

The number of killed in his own ranks had been very small, notwithstanding the severe loss inflicted on the enemy. These few he was careful to bury where they could not be discovered, anxious to conceal not only the amount of the slain, but the fact that the whites were mortal. But very many of the men were wounded, and all the horses.

THE SACRED CITY OF CHOLULA

THE ancient city of Cholula, capital of the republic of that name, lay nearly six leagues south of Tlascala, and about twenty east, or rather south-east, of Mexico. It was said by Cortés to contain twenty thousand houses within the walls, and as many more in the environs; though now dwindled to a population of less than sixteen thousand souls. Whatever was its real number of inhabitants, it was unquestionably, at the time of the Conquest, one of the most populous and flourishing cities in New Spain.

It was of great antiquity, and was founded by the primitive races who overspread the land before the Aztecs. We have few particulars of its form of government, which seems to have been cast on a republican model similar to that of Tlascala. This answered so well that the state maintained its independence down to a very late period, when,

if not reduced to vassalage by the Aztecs, it was so far under their control as to enjoy few of the benefits of a separate political existence. Their connection with Mexico brought the Cholulans into frequent collision with their neighbours and kindred the Tlascalans. The Cholulan capital was the great commercial emporium of the plateau. The inhabitants excelled in various mechanical arts, especially that of working in metals, the manufacture of cotton and agave cloths and of a delicate kind of pottery rivalling that of Florence in beauty.

But the capital so conspicuous for its refinement and great antiquity, was even more venerable for the religious traditions which invested it. It was here that the god Quetzalcoatl paused in his passage to the coast, and passed twenty years in teaching the Toltec inhabitants the arts of civilisation. He made them acquainted with better forms of government and a more spiritualised religion, in which the only sacrifices were the fruits and flowers of the season. It is probable that he was one of those rare and gifted beings, who, dissipating the darkness of the age by the illumination of their own genius, are defied by a grateful posterity and placed among the lights of heaven.

It was in honour of this benevolent deity that the stupendous mound was erected on which the traveller still gazes with admiration as the most colossal fabric in New Spain, rivalling in dimensions, and somewhat resembling in form, the pyramidal structures of ancient Egypt. The date of its erection is unknown; for it was found there when the Aztecs entered on the plateau. It had

the form common to the Mexican *teocallis*, that of a truncated pyramid, facing with its four sides the cardinal points, and divided into the same number of terraces.

The perpendicular height of the pyramid is one hundred and seventy-seven feet. Its base is one thousand four hundred and twenty-three feet long, twice as long as that of the great pyramid of Cheops. It may give some idea of its dimensions to state that its base, which is square, covers about forty-four acres, and the platform on its truncated summit embraces more than one. It reminds us of those colossal monuments of brickwork which are still seen in ruins on the banks of the Euphrates, and, in much higher preservation, on those of the Nile.

On the summit stood a sumptuous temple, in which was the image of the mystic deity, "god of the air," with ebon features, unlike the fair complexion which he bore upon earth, wearing a mitre on his head waving with *plumes of fire*, with a resplendent collar of gold round his neck, pendants of mosaic turquoise in his ears, a jewelled sceptre in one hand, and a shield curiously painted, the emblem of his rule over the winds, in the other. The sanctity of the place, hallowed by hoary tradition, and the magnificence of the temple and its services, made it an object of veneration throughout the land, and pilgrims from the farthest corners of Anahuac came to offer up their devotions at the shrine of Quetzalcoatl.

The religious rites were not performed, however, in the pure spirit originally prescribed by its tutelary deity. His altars, as well as those of the

numerous Aztec gods, were stained with human blood; and six thousand victims *are said* to have been annually offered up at their sanguinary shrines! The great number of these may be estimated from the declaration of Cortés that he counted four hundred towers in the city; yet no temple had more than two, many only one. High above the rest rose the great "pyramid of Cholula," with its undying fires flinging their radiance far and wide over the capital, and proclaiming to the nations that there was the mystic worship—alas! how corrupted by cruelty and superstition!—of the good deity who was one day to return and resume his empire over the land.

Nothing could be more grand than the view which met the eye from the area on the truncated summit of the pyramid. Towards the west stretched that bold barrier of porphyritic rock which nature has reared around the Valley of Mexico, with the huge Popocatepetl and Iztacihuatl standing like two colossal sentinels to guard the entrance to the enchanted region. Far away to the east was seen the conical head of Orizaba soaring high into the clouds, and nearer, the barren though beautifully-shaped Sierra de la Malinche, throwing its broad shadows over the plains of Tlascala. Three of these are volcanoes higher than the highest mountain-peak in Europe, and shrouded in snows which never melt under the fierce sun of the tropics. At the foot of the spectator lay the sacred city of Cholula, with its bright towers and pinnacles sparkling in the sun, reposing amidst gardens and verdant groves, which then thickly studded the cultivated environs of the

capital. Such was the magnificent prospect which met the gaze of the Conquerors, and may still, with slight change, meet that of the modern traveller, as from the platform of the great pyramid his eye wanders over the fairest portion of the beautiful plateau of Puebla.

THE MASSACRE AT CHOLULA

THE amiable manners of Marina the Indian girl had won her the regard of the wife of one of the caciques, who repeatedly urged Marina to visit her house, darkly intimating that in this way she would escape the fate that awaited the Spaniards. The interpreter, seeing the importance of obtaining further intelligence at once, pretended to be pleased with the proposal, and affected, at the same time, great discontent with the white men, by whom she was detained in captivity. Thus throwing the credulous Cholulan off her guard, Marina gradually insinuated herself into her confidence, so far as to draw from her a full account of the conspiracy.

It originated, she said, with the Aztec emperor, who had sent rich bribes to the great caciques, and to her husband among others, to secure them in his views. The Spaniards were to be assaulted as they marched out of the capital, when entangled in its streets, in which numerous impediments had been placed to throw the cavalry into disorder. A force of twenty thousand Mexicans was already quartered at no great distance from the city, to support the Cholulans in the assault. It was confidently expected that the Spaniards, thus em-

barrassed in their movements, would fall an easy prey to the superior strength of their enemy. A sufficient number of prisoners was to be reserved to grace the sacrifices of Cholula; the rest were to be led in fetters to the capital of Montezuma.

While this conversation was going on, Marina occupied herself with putting up such articles of value and wearing apparel as she proposed to take with her in the evening, when she could escape unnoticed from the Spanish quarters to the house of her Cholulan friend, who assisted her in the operation. Leaving her visitor thus employed, Marina found an opportunity to steal away for a few moments, and, going to the general's apartment, disclosed to him her discoveries. He immediately caused the cacique's wife to be seized, and, on examination, she fully confirmed the statement of his Indian mistress.

The intelligence thus gathered by Cortés filled him with the deepest alarm. He was fairly taken in the snare. To fight or to fly seemed equally difficult. He was in a city of enemies, where every house might be converted into a fortress, and where such embarrassments were thrown in the way as might render the manœuvres of his artillery and horse nearly impracticable. In addition to the wily Cholulans, he must cope, under all these disadvantages, with the redoubtable warriors of Mexico. He was like a traveller who has lost his way in the darkness among precipices, where any step may dash him to pieces, and where to retreat or to advance is equally perilous.

He was desirous to obtain still further confirmation and particulars of the conspiracy. He

accordingly induced two of the priests in the neighbourhood, one of them a person of much influence in the place, to visit his quarters. By courteous treatment, and liberal largesses of the rich presents he had received from Montezuma,—thus turning his own gifts against the giver,—he drew from them a full confirmation of the previous report. The emperor had been in a state of pitiable vacillation since the arrival of the Spaniards. His first orders to the Cholulans were to receive the strangers kindly. He had recently consulted his oracles anew, and obtained for answer that Cholula would be the grave of his enemies; for the gods would be sure to support him in avenging the sacrilege offered to the Holy City. So confident were the Aztecs of success, that numerous manacles, or poles with thongs which served as such, were already in the place to secure the prisoners.

With the first streak of morning light, Cortés was seen on horseback directing the movements of his little band. The strength of his forces he drew up in the great square or court, surrounded partly by building and in part by a high wall. There were three gates of entrance, at each of which he placed a strong guard. The rest of his troops, with his great guns, he posted without the enclosure, in such a manner as to command the avenues and secure those within from interruption in their bloody work. Orders had been sent the night before to the Tlascalan chiefs to hold themselves ready, at a concerted signal, to march into the city and join the Spaniards.

The arrangements were hardly completed,

before the Cholulan caciques appeared, leading a body of levies, *tamanes*, even more numerous than had been demanded. They were marched at once into the square, commanded, as we have seen, by the Spanish infantry, which was drawn up under the walls. Cortés then took some of the caciques aside. With a stern air, he bluntly charged them with the conspiracy, showing that he was well acquainted with all the particulars. He had visited their city, he said, at the invitation of their emperor; had come as a friend; had respected the inhabitants and their property; and, to avoid all cause of umbrage, had left a great part of his forces without the walls. They had received him with a show of kindness and hospitality, and, reposing on this, he had been decoyed into the snare, and found this kindness only a mask to cover the blackest perfidy.

The Cholulans were thunderstruck at the accusation. An undefined awe crept over them as they gazed on the mysterious strangers and felt themselves in the presence of beings who seemed to have the power of reading the thoughts scarcely formed in their bosoms. There was no use in prevarication or denial before such judges. They confessed the whole, and endeavoured to excuse themselves by throwing the blame on Montezuma. Cortés, assuming an air of higher indignation at this, assured them that the pretence should not serve, since, even if well founded, it would be no justification; and he would now make such an example of them for their treachery that the report of it should ring throughout the wide borders of Anahuac!

The fatal signal, the discharge of an arquebuse, was then given. In an instant every musket and crossbow was levelled at the unfortunate Cholulans in the courtyard, and a frightful volley poured into them as they stood crowded together like a herd of deer in the centre. They were taken by surprise, for they had not heard the preceding dialogue with the chiefs. They made scarcely any resistance to the Spaniards, who followed up the discharge of their pieces by rushing on them with their swords; and, as the half-naked bodies of the natives afforded no protection, they hewed them down with as much ease as the reaper mows down the ripe corn in harvest-time. Some endeavoured to scale the walls, but only afforded a surer mark to the arquebusiers and archers. Others threw themselves into the gateways, but were received on the long pikes of the soldiers who guarded them. Some few had better luck in hiding themselves under the heaps of slain with which the ground was soon loaded.

While this work of death was going on, the countrymen of the slaughtered Indians, drawn together by the noise of the massacre, had commenced a furious assault on the Spaniards from without. But Cortés had placed his battery of heavy guns in a position that commanded the avenues, and swept off the files of the assailants as they rushed on. In the intervals between the discharges, which, in the imperfect state of the science in that day, were much longer than in ours, he forced back the press by charging with the horse into the midst. The steeds, the guns, the weapons of the Spaniards were all new to

the Cholulans. Notwithstanding the novelty of the terrific spectacle, the flash of firearms mingling with the deafening roar of the artillery as its thunders reverberated among the buildings, the despairing Indians pushed on to take the places of their fallen comrades.

While this fierce struggle was going forward, the Tlascalans, hearing the concerted signal, had advanced with quick pace into the city. They had bound, by order of Cortés, wreaths of sedge round their heads, that they might the more surely be distinguished from the Cholulans. Coming up in the very heat of the engagement, they fell on the defenceless rear of the townsmen, who, trampled down under the heels of the Castilian cavalry on one side, and galled by their vindictive enemies on the other, could no longer maintain their ground. They gave way, some taking refuge in the nearest buildings, which, being partly of wood, were speedily set on fire. Others fled to the temples. One strong party, with a number of priests at its head, got possession of the great *teocalli*. There was a vulgar tradition, already alluded to, that on removal of part of the walls the god would send forth an inundation to overwhelm his enemies. The superstitious Cholulans with great difficulty succeeded in wrenching away some of the stones in the walls of the edifice. But dust, not water, followed. Their false god deserted them in the hour of need. In despair they flung themselves into the wooden turrets that crowned the temple, and poured down stones, javelins, and burning arrows on the Spaniards, as they climbed the great stair-

case which, by a flight of one hundred and twenty steps, scaled the face of the pyramid. But the fiery shower fell harmless on the steel bonnets of the Christians, while they availed themselves of the burning shafts to set fire to the wooden citadel, which was speedily wrapt in flames. Still the garrison held out, and though quarter, *it is said*, was offered, only one Cholulan availed himself of it. The rest threw themselves headlong from the parapet, or perished miserably in the flames.

All was now confusion and uproar in the fair city which had so lately reposed in security and peace. The groans of the dying, the frantic supplications of the vanquished for mercy, were mingled with the loud battle-cries of the Spaniards as they rode down their enemy, and with the shrill whistle of the Tlascalans, who gave full scope to the long-cherished rancour of ancient rivalry. The tumult was still further swelled by the incessant rattle of musketry, and the crash of falling timbers, which sent up a volume of flame that outshone the ruddy light of morning, making altogether a hideous confusion of sights and sounds that converted the Holy City into a Pandemonium. As resistance slackened, the victors broke into the houses and sacred places, plundered them of whatever valuables they contained, plate, jewels, which were found in some quantity, wearing apparel and provisions, the two last coveted even more than the former by the simple Tlascalans, thus facilitating a division of the spoil much to the satisfaction of their Christian confederates. Amidst this universal licence, it is worthy of remark, the commands

of Cortés were so far respected that no violence was offered to women or children, though these, as well as numbers of the men, were made prisoners to be swept into slavery by the Tlascalans. These scenes of violence had lasted some hours, when Cortés, moved by the entreaties of some Cholulan chiefs who had been reserved from the massacre, backed by the prayers of the Mexican envoys, consented, out of regard, as he said, to the latter, the representatives of Montezuma, to call off the soldiers, and put a stop, as well as he could, to further outrage. Two of the caciques were, also, permitted to go to their countrymen with assurances of pardon and protection to all who would return to their obedience. These measures had their effect. By the joint effort of Cortés and the caciques, the tumult was with much difficulty appeased.

CORTÉS HAS HIS FIRST SIGHT OF THE CITY OF MEXICO

TERROR OF MONTEZUMA

THEY had not advanced far when, turning an angle in the Sierra, they suddenly came on a view which more than compensated the toils of the preceding day. It was that of the Valley of Mexico or Tenochtitlan, as more commonly called by the natives, which for its picturesque assemblage of water, woodland, and cultivated plain, its shining cities and shadowy hills, was spread out like some gay and gorgeous panorama before them. In the highly rarefied atmosphere of these upper regions

even remote objects have a brilliancy of colouring and a distinctness of outline that seem to annihilate distance. Stretching far away at their feet were seen noble forests of oak, sycamore, and cedar, and beyond yellow fields of maize, and the towering magney, intermingled with orchards and blooming gardens, for flowers, in such demand for their religious festivals, were even more abundant in this populous valley than in other parts of Anahuac. In the centre of the great basin were beheld the lakes, occupying then a much larger portion of its surface than at present; their borders thickly studded with towns and hamlets, and, in the midst, —like some Indian empress with her coronal of pearls,—the fair city of Mexico, with her white towers and pyramidal temples, reposing, as it were, on the bosom of the waters,—the far-famed “Venice of the Aztecs.” High over all rose the royal hill of Chapoltepec, the residence of the Mexican monarchs, crowned with the same grove of gigantic cypresses which at this day fling their broad shadows over the land. In the distance beyond the blue waters of the lake, and nearly screened by intervening foliage, was seen a shining speck, the rival capital of Tezcuco, and, still farther on, the dark belt of porphyry, girdling the Valley around, like a rich setting which Nature had devised for the fairest of her jewels.

Such was the beautiful vision which broke on the eyes of the Conquerors. It was like the spectacle which greeted the eyes of Moses from the summit of Pisgah, and, in the warm glow of their feelings, they cried out, “It is the promised land!”

But these feelings of admiration were soon followed by others of a very different complexion, as they saw in all this the evidences of a civilization and power far superior to anything they had yet encountered. The more timid, disheartened by the prospect, shrunk from a contest so unequal, and demanded, as they had done on some former occasions, to be led back again to Vera Cruz. Such was not the effect produced on the sanguine spirit of the general. His avarice was sharpened by the display of the dazzling spoil at his feet; and, if he felt a natural anxiety at the formidable odds, his confidence was renewed, as he gazed on the lines of his veterans, whose weather-beaten visages and battered armour told of battles won and difficulties surmounted, while his bold barbarians, with appetites whetted by the view of their enemies' country, seemed like eagles on the mountains, ready to pounce upon their prey. By argument, entreaty, and menace, he endeavoured to restore the faltering courage of the soldiers, urging them not to think of retreat, now that they had reached the goal for which they had panted, and the golden gates were opened to receive them.

He advanced by easy stages, somewhat retarded by the crowd of curious inhabitants gathered on the highways to see the strangers, and halting at every spot of interest or importance. On the road, he was met by another embassy from the capital. It consisted of several Aztec lords, freighted as usual, with a rich largess of gold, and robes of delicate furs and feathers. The message of the emperor was couched in the same deprecatory terms as before. He even con-

descended to bribe the return of the Spaniards, by promising, in that event, four loads of gold to the general, and one to each of the captains, with a yearly tribute to their sovereign. So effectually had the lofty and naturally courageous spirit of the barbarian monarch been subdued by the influence of superstition !

But the man whom the hostile array of armies could not daunt was not to be turned from his purpose by a woman's prayers. He received the embassy with his usual courtesy, declaring, as before, that he could not answer it to his own sovereign if he were now to return without visiting the emperor in his capital. It would be much easier to arrange matters by a personal interview than by distant negotiation. The Spaniards came in the spirit of peace. Montezuma would so find it; but, should their presence prove burdensome to him, it would be easy for them to relieve him of it.

The Aztec monarch, meanwhile, was a prey to the most dismal apprehensions. It was intended that the embassy above noticed should reach the Spaniards before they crossed the mountains. When he learned that this was accomplished, and that the dread strangers were on their march across the Valley, the very threshold of his capital, the last spark of hope died away in his bosom. Like one who suddenly finds himself on the brink of some dark and yawning gulf, he was too much bewildered to be able to rally his thoughts, or even to comprehend his situation. He was the victim of an absolute destiny, against which no foresight or precautions could have

availed. It was as if the strange beings who had thus invaded his shores had dropped from some distant planet, so different were they from all he had ever seen, in appearance and manners; so superior—though a mere handful in numbers—to the banded nations of Anahuac in strength and science and all the fearful accompaniments of war! They were now in the Valley. The huge mountain screen, which nature had so kindly drawn around it for its defence, had been over-leaped. The golden visions of security and repose in which he had so long indulged, the lordly sway descended from his ancestors, his broad imperial domain, were all to pass away. It seemed like some terrible dream,—from which he was now, alas! to awake to a still more terrible reality.

In a paroxysm of despair, he shut himself up in his palace, refused food, and sought relief in prayer and in sacrifice. But the oracles were dumb. He then adopted the more sensible expedient of calling a council of his principal and oldest nobles. Here was the same division of opinion which had before prevailed. Cacama, the young king of Tezcuco, his nephew, counselled him to receive the Spaniards courteously, as ambassadors, so styled by themselves, of a foreign prince. Cuitlahua, Montezuma's more warlike brother, urged him to muster his forces on the instant, and drive back the invaders from his capital or die in its defence. But the monarch found it difficult to rally his spirits for this final struggle. With downcast eye and dejected mien, he exclaimed, "Of what avail is resistance, when

the gods have declared themselves against us? Yet I mourn most for the old and infirm, the women and children, too feeble to fight or to fly. For myself and the brave men around me, we must bare our breasts to the storm, and meet it as we may!" Such are the sorrowful and sympathetic tones in which the Aztec emperor is said to have uttered the bitterness of his grief. He would have acted a more glorious part had he put his capital in a posture of defence and prepared like the last of the Palæologi, to bury himself under its ruins.

THE ENVIRONS OF THE CITY OF MEXICO

WITH the first faint streak of dawn, the Spanish general was up, mustering his followers. They gathered, with beating hearts, under their respective banners, as the trumpet sent forth its spirit-stirring sounds across water and woodland, till they died away in distant echoes among the mountains. The sacred flames on the altars of numberless *teocallis*, dimly seen through the grey mists of morning, indicated the site of the capital, till temple, tower, and palace were fully revealed in the glorious illumination which the sun, as he rose above the eastern barrier, poured over the beautiful Valley. It was the eighth of November 1519; a conspicuous day in history, as that on which the Europeans first set foot in the capital of the Western World.

Cortés with his little body of horse formed a sort of advanced guard to the army. Then came the

Spanish infantry, who in a summer's campaign had acquired the discipline and the weather-beaten aspect of veterans. The baggage occupied the centre; and the rear was closed by the dark files of Tlascalan warriors. The whole number must have fallen short of seven thousand; of which less than four hundred were Spaniards.

For a short distance, the army kept along the narrow tongue of land that divides the Tezcucan from the Chalcan waters, when it entered on the great dike, which, with the exception of an angle near the commencement, stretches in a perfectly straight line across the salt floods of Tezcuco to the gates of the capital. It was the same causeway, or rather the basis of that, which still forms the great southern avenue of Mexico. The Spaniards had occasion more than ever to admire the mechanical science of the Aztecs, in the geometrical precision with which the work was executed, as well as the solidity of its construction. It was composed of huge stones well laid in cement, and wide enough, throughout its whole extent, for ten horsemen to ride abreast.

They saw, as they passed along, several large towns, resting on piles, and reaching far into the water,—a kind of architecture which found great favour with the Aztecs, being in imitation of that of their metropolis. The busy population obtained a good subsistence from the manufacture of salt, which they extracted from the waters of the great lake. The duties on the traffic in this article were a considerable source of revenue to the crown.

Everywhere the Conquerors beheld the evidence

of a crowded and thriving population, exceeding all they had yet seen. The temples and principal buildings of the cities were covered with a hard white stucco, which glistened like enamel in the level beams of the morning. The margin of the great basin was more thickly gemmed than that of Chalco with towns and hamlets. The water was darkened by swarms of canoes filled with Indians, who clambered up the sides of the causeway and gazed with curious astonishment on the strangers. And here, also, they beheld those fairy islands of flowers, overshadowed occasionally by trees of considerable size, rising and falling with the gentle undulation of the billows. At the distance of half a league from the capital, they encountered a solid work or curtain of stone, which traversed the dike. It was twelve feet high, was strengthened by towers at the extremities, and in the centre was a battlemented gateway, which opened a passage to the troops. It was called the Fort of Xoloc, and became memorable in aftertimes as the position occupied by Cortés in the famous siege of Mexico.

. Here they were met by several hundred Aztec chiefs, who came out to announce the approach of Montezuma and to welcome the Spaniards to his capital. They were dressed in the fanciful gala costume of the country, with the *maxtlatl*, or cotton sash, around their loins, and a broad mantle of the same material, or of the brilliant feather-embroidery, flowing gracefully down their shoulders. On their necks and arms they displayed collars and bracelets of turquoise mosaic, with which delicate plumage was curiously mingled,

while their ears, under-lips and occasionally their noses, were garnished with pendants formed of precious stones, or crescents of fine gold. As each cacique made the usual formal salutation of the country separately to the general, the tedious ceremony delayed the march more than an hour. After this, the army experienced no further interruption till it reached a bridge near the gates of the city. It was built of wood, since replaced by one of stone, and was thrown across an opening of the dike, which furnished an outlet to the waters when agitated by the winds or swollen by a sudden influx in the rainy season. It was a drawbridge; and the Spaniards, as they crossed it, felt how truly they were committing themselves to the mercy of Montezuma, who, by thus cutting off communications with the country, might hold them prisoners in his capital.

FIRST INTERVIEW WITH MONTEZUMA THE AZTEC EMPEROR

IN the midst of these unpleasant reflections they (the Spaniards) beheld the glittering retinue of the Emperor emerging from the great street which led then, as it still does, through the heart of the city. Amidst a crowd of Indian nobles, preceeded by three officers of state bearing golden wands, they saw the royal palanquin blazing with burnished gold. It was borne on the shoulders of nobles, and over it a canopy of gaudy feather-work, powdered with jewels and fringed with silver, was supported by four attendants of the same rank. They were barefooted, and walked with a slow,

measured pace, and with eyes bent on the ground. When the train had come within a convenient distance, it halted, and Montezuma, descending from his litter, came forward, leaning on the arms of the lords of Tezcucó and Iztapalapan, his nephew and brother, both of whom, as we have seen, had already been made known to the Spaniards. As the monarch advanced under the canopy, the obsequious attendants strewed the ground with cotton tapestry, that his imperial feet might not be contaminated by the rude soil. His subjects of high and low degree, who lined the sides of the causeway, bent forward with their eyes fastened on the ground as he passed, and some of the humbler class prostrated themselves before him. Such was the homage paid to the Indian despot, showing that the slavish forms of Oriental adulation were to be found among the rude inhabitants of the Western World.

Montezuma wore the girdle and ample square cloak, *tilmatlí*, of his nation. It was made of the finest cotton, with the embroidered ends gathered in a knot round his neck. His feet were defended by sandals having soles of gold, and the leathern thongs which bound them to his ankles were embossed with the same metal. Both the cloak and sandals were sprinkled with pearls and precious stones, among which the emerald and the *chalchivítl*—a green stone of higher estimation than any other among the Aztecs—were conspicuous. On his head he wore no other ornament than a *panache* of plumes of the royal green, which floated down his back, the badge of military, rather than of regal, rank.

He was at this time about forty years of age. His person was tall and thin, but not ill made. His hair, which was black and straight, was not very long ; to wear it short was considered unbecoming persons of rank. His beard was thin ; his complexion somewhat paler than is often found in his dusky, or rather copper-coloured, race. His features, though serious in their expression, did not wear the look of melancholy, indeed, of dejection, which characterises his portrait, and which may well have settled on them at a later period. He moved with dignity, and his whole demeanour, tempered by an expression of benignity not to have been anticipated from the reports circulated of his character, was worthy of a great prince. Such is the portrait left to us of the celebrated Indian emperor in this his first interview with the white men.

The army halted as he drew near. Cortés, dismounting, threw his reins to a page, and, supported by a few of the principal cavaliers, advanced to meet him. The interview must have been one of uncommon interest to both. In Montezuma, Cortés beheld the lord of the broad realms he had traversed, whose magnificence and power had been the burden of every tongue. In the Spaniard, on the other hand, the Aztec prince saw the strange being whose history seemed to be so mysteriously connected with his own ; the predicted one of his oracles ; whose achievements proclaimed him something more than human. But, whatever may have been the monarch's feelings, he so far suppressed them as to receive his guest with princely courtesy, and to express

his satisfaction at personally seeing him in his capital. Cortés responded by the most profound expressions of respect, while he made ample acknowledgments for the substantial proofs which the emperor had given the Spaniards of his munificence. He then hung round Montezuma's neck a sparkling chain of coloured crystal, accompanying this with a movement as if to embrace him, when he was restrained by the two Aztec lords, shocked at the menaced profanation of the sacred person of their master. After the interchange of these civilities, Montezuma appointed his brother to conduct the Spaniards to their residence in the capital, and, again entering his litter, was borne off amidst prostrate crowds in the same state in which he had come. The Spaniards quickly followed, and, with colours flying and music playing, soon made their entrance into the southern quarter of Tenochtitlan.

THE SPANISH QUARTERS IN THE CITY OF MEXICO

HERE, again, they found fresh cause for admiration in the grandeur of the city and the superior style of its architecture. The dwellings of the poorer class were, indeed, chiefly of reeds and mud. But the great avenue through which they were now marching was lined with the houses of the nobles, who were encouraged by the emperor to make the capital their residence. They were built of a red porous stone drawn from quarries in the neighbourhood, and, though they rarely rose to a second story, often covered a large space of ground,

The flat roofs, *azoteas*, were protected by stone parapets, so that every house was a fortress. Sometimes these roofs resembled parterres of flowers, so thickly were they covered with them, but more frequently these were cultivated in broad terraced gardens, laid out between the edifices. Occasionally a great square or market-place intervened, surrounded by its porticoes of stone and stucco; or a pyramidal temple reared its colossal bulk, crowned with its tapering sanctuaries, and altars blazing with inextinguishable fires. The great street facing the southern causeway, unlike most others in the place, was wide, and extended some miles in nearly a straight line, as before noticed, through the centre of the city. A spectator standing at one end of it, as his eye ranged along the deep vista of temples, terraces, and gardens, might clearly discern the other, with the blue mountains in the distance, which, in the transparent atmosphere of the table-land, seemed almost in contact with the buildings.

But what most impressed the Spaniards was the throngs of people who swarmed through the streets and on the canals, filling every doorway and window and clustering on the roofs of the buildings.

As they passed down the spacious street, the troops repeatedly traversed bridges suspended above canals, along which they saw the Indian barks gliding swiftly with their little cargoes of fruits and vegetables for the markets of Tenochtitlan. At length they halted before a broad area near the centre of the city, where rose the huge pyramidal pile dedicated to the patron war-

god of the Aztecs, second only, in size as well as sanctity, to the temple of Cholula, and covering the same ground now in part occupied by the great cathedral of Mexico.

Facing the western gate of the enclosure of the temple, stood a low range of stone buildings, spreading over a wide extent of ground, the palace of Axayacatl, Montezuma's father, built by that monarch about fifty years before. It was appropriated as the barracks of the Spaniards. The emperor himself was in the courtyard, waiting to receive them. Approaching Cortés, he took from a vase of flowers, borne by one of his slaves, a massy collar, in which the shell of a species of crawfish, much prized by the Indians, was set in gold and connected by heavy links of the same metal. From this chain depended eight ornaments, also of gold, made in resemblance of the same shellfish, a span in length each, and of delicate workmanship; for the Aztec goldsmiths were confessed to have shown skill in their craft not inferior to their brethren of Europe. Montezuma, as he hung the gorgeous collar round the general's neck, said, "This palace belongs to you, Malinche" (the epithet by which he always addressed him), "and your brethren. Rest after your fatigues, for you have much need to do so, and in a little while I will visit you again." So saying, he withdrew with his attendants, evincing in this act a delicate consideration not to have been expected in a barbarian.

Cortés' first care was to inspect his new quarters. The building, though spacious, was low, consisting of one floor, except, indeed, in

the centre, where it rose to an additional story. The apartments were of great size, and afforded accommodation, according to the testimony of the Conquerors themselves, for the whole army! The hardy mountaineers of Tlascala were, probably, not very fastidious, and might easily find a shelter in the outbuildings, or under temporary awnings in the ample courtyards. The best apartments were hung with gay cotton draperies, the floors covered with mats or rushes. There were also low stools made of single pieces of wood elaborately carved, and in most of the apartments beds made of the palm leaf, woven into a thick mat, with coverlets, and sometimes canopies, of cotton. These mats were the only beds used by the natives, whether of high or low degree.

After a rapid survey of this gigantic pile, the general assigned his troops their respective quarters, and took as vigilant precautions for security as if he had anticipated a siege in place of a friendly entertainment. He planted his cannon so as to command the approaches, stationed his sentinels along the works, and in fact enforced as strict military discipline as had been observed in any part of the march.

MONTEZUMA PAYS CORTES A STATE VISIT

CORTÉS VISITS MONTEZUMA

MONTEZUMA was attended by a few of his principal nobles. He was received with much deference by Cortés, and after the parties had

taken their seats a conversation commenced between them through the aid of Doña Marina, while the cavaliers and Aztec Chieftains stood around in respectful silence.

Montezuma made many inquiries concerning the country of the Spaniards, their sovereign, the nature of his government, and especially their own motives in visiting Anahuac. Cortés explained these motives by the desire to see so distinguished a monarch and to declare to him the true Faith professed by the Christians. With rare discretion, he contented himself with dropping this hint, for the present, allowing it to ripen in the mind of the emperor, till a future conference. The latter asked whether those white men who in the preceding year had landed on the eastern shores of his empire were their countrymen. He showed himself well informed of the proceedings of the Spaniards from their arrival in Tabasco to the present time, information of which had been regularly transmitted in the hieroglyphical paintings. He was curious, also, in regard to the rank of his visitors in their own country; inquiring if they were the kinsmen of the sovereign. Cortés replied, they were kinsmen of one another, and subjects of their great monarch, who held them all in peculiar estimation. Before his departure, Montezuma made himself acquainted with the names of the principal cavaliers, and the position they occupied in the army.

At the conclusion of the interview, the Aztec prince commanded his attendants to bring forward the presents prepared for his guests. They con-

sisted of cotton dresses, enough to supply every man, it is said, including the allies, with a suit ! And he did not fail to add the usual accompaniment of gold chains and other ornaments, which he distributed in profusion among the Spaniards. He then withdrew with the same ceremony with which he had entered, leaving every one deeply impressed with his munificence and his affability, so unlike what they had been taught to expect by what they now considered an invention of the enemy.

That evening the Spaniards celebrated their arrival in the Mexican capital by a general discharge of artillery. The thunders of the ordnance, reverberating among the buildings and shaking them to their foundations, the stench of the sulphureous vapour that rolled in volumes above the walls of the encampment, reminding the inhabitants of the explosions of the great *volcan*, filled the hearts of the superstitious Aztecs with dismay. It proclaimed to them that their city held in its bosom those dread beings whose path had been marked with desolation, and who could call down the thunderbolts to consume their enemies ! It was doubtless the policy of Cortés to strengthen this superstitious feeling as far as possible, and to impress the natives, at the outset, with a salutary awe of the supernatural powers of the Spaniards.

On the following morning, the general requested permission to return the emperor's visit, by waiting on him in his palace. This was readily granted, and Montezuma sent his officers to conduct the Spaniards to his presence. Cortés dressed

himself in his richest habit, and left the quarters attended by Alvarado, Sandoval, Velasquez, and Ordaz, together with five or six of the common file.

The royal habitation was at no great distance. It stood on the ground since covered in part by the palace of the Dukes of Monteleone, the descendants of Cortés. It was a vast irregular pile of low stone buildings like that garrisoned by the Spaniards. So spacious was it indeed that, as one of the Conquerors assures us, although he had visited it more than once for the express purpose, he had been too much fatigued each time by wandering through the apartments ever to see the whole of it. It was built of the red porous stone of the country, *tetzontli*, was ornamented with marble, and on the façade over the principal entrance were sculptured the arms or device of Montezuma, an eagle bearing an ocelot in his talons.

In the courts through which the Spaniards passed, fountains of crystal water were playing, fed from the copious reservoir on the distant hill of Chapoltepec, and supplying in their turn more than a hundred baths in the interior of the palace. Crowds of Aztec nobles were sauntering up and down in these squares, and in the outer halls, loitering away their hours in attendance on the court. The apartments were of immense size, though not lofty. The ceilings were of various sorts of odoriferous wood ingeniously carved; the floors covered with mats of the palm leaf. The walls were hung with cotton richly stained, with the skins of wild animals, or gorgeous draperies of feather-work wrought in imitation of birds, insects,

and flowers, with the nice art and glowing radiance of colours that might compare with the tapestries of Flanders. Clouds of incense rolled up from censurs and diffused intoxicating odours through the apartments. On reaching the hall of audience, the Mexican officers took off their sandals, and covered their gay attire with a mantle of *nequen*, a coarse stuff made of the fibres of the maguey, worn only by the poorest classes. This act of humiliation was imposed on all, except the members of his own family, who approached the sovereign. Thus barefooted, with downcast eyes, and formal obeisance, they ushered the Spaniards into the royal presence.

They found Montezuma seated at the further end of a spacious saloon and surrounded by a few of his favourite chiefs. He received them kindly, and very soon Cortés, without much ceremony, entered on the subject which was uppermost in his thoughts. He was fully aware of the importance of gaining the royal convert, whose example would have such an influence on the conversion of his people. The general, therefore, prepared to display the whole store of his theological science, with the most winning arts of rhetoric he could command, while the interpretation was conveyed through the silver tones of Marina, as inseparable from him, on these occasions, as his shadow.

The eloquence of the preacher was wasted on the insensible heart of his royal auditor. It doubtless lost somewhat of its efficacy, strained through the imperfect interpretation of so recent a neophyte as the Indian damsel. But the doctrines were too abstruse in themselves to be comprehended at a

glance by the rude intellect of a barbarian. And Montezuma may have, perhaps, thought it was not more monstrous to feed on the flesh of a fellow-creature than on that of the Creator himself. He was, besides, steeped in the superstitions of his country from his cradle. He had been educated in the strictest sect of her religion, had been himself a priest before his election to the throne, and was now the head both of the religion and the state. Little probability was there that such a man would be open to argument or persuasion, even from the lips of a more practised polemic than the Spanish commander. How could he abjure the faith that was intertwined with the dearest affections of his heart and the very elements of his being? How could he be false to the gods who had raised him to such prosperity and honours, and whose shrines were intrusted to his especial keeping?

He listened, however, with silent attention, until the general had concluded his homily. He then replied that he knew the Spaniards had held this discourse wherever they had been. He doubted not their God was, as they said, a good being. His gods, also, were good to him.

As to the subversion of Montezuma's empire, now that Cortés had seen him in his capital, it must have seemed a more doubtful enterprise than ever!

SCENES IN THE CAPITAL OF MEXICO

THE *chinampas*, that archipelago of wandering islands, to which our attention was drawn in the last chapter, have, also, nearly disappeared. These

had their origin in the detached masses of earth, which, loosening from the shores, were still held together by the fibrous roots with which they were penetrated. The primitive Aztecs, in their poverty of land, availed themselves of the hint thus afforded by nature. They constructed rafts of reeds, rushes, and other fibrous materials, which, tightly knit together, formed a sufficient basis for the sediment that they drew up from the bottom of the lake. Gradually islands were formed, two or three hundred feet in length, and three or four feet in depth, with a rich stimulated soil, on which the economical Indian raised his vegetables and flowers for the markets of Tenochtitlan. Some of these *chinampas* were even firm enough to allow the growth of small trees, and to sustain a hut for the residence of the person that had charge of it, who with a long pole, resting on the sides or the bottom of the shallow basin, could change the position of his little territory at pleasure, which with its rich freight of vegetable stores was seen moving like some enchanted island over the water.

The great streets which were coated with hard cement were intersected by numerous canals. Some of these were flanked by a solid way which served as a footwalk for passengers, and as a landing-place where boats might discharge their cargo. Small buildings were erected at intervals, as stations for the revenue officers who collected the duties on different articles of merchandise. The canals were traversed by numerous bridges, many of which could be raised, affording the means of cutting off communication between different parts of the city.

The population of Tenochtitlan at the time of the Conquest is variously stated. No contemporary writer estimates it at less than sixty thousand houses, which, by the ordinary rules of reckoning, would give three hundred thousand souls. If a dwelling often contained, as is asserted, several families, it would swell the amount considerably higher. Nothing is more uncertain than estimates of numbers among barbarous communities.

A careful police provided for the health and cleanliness of the city. A thousand persons are said to have been daily employed in watering and sweeping the streets, so that a man—to borrow the language of an old Spaniard—"could walk through them with as little danger of soiling his feet as his hands." The water, in a city washed on all sides by the salt floods, was extremely brackish. A liberal supply of the pure element was brought from Chapoltepec, the "grass-hoppers hill," less than a league distant. It was brought through an earthen pipe, along a dike constructed for the purpose. That there might be no failure in so essential an article when repairs were going on, a double course of pipes was laid. In this way a column of water of the size of a man's body was conducted into the heart of the capital, where it fed the fountains and reservoirs of the principal mansions. Openings were made in the aqueduct as it crossed the bridges, and thus a supply was furnished to the canoes below, by means of which it was transported to all parts of the city.

While Montezuma encouraged a taste for archi-

tectural magnificence in his nobles, he contributed his own share towards the embellishment of the city. It was in his reign that the famous calendar stone, weighing, probably, in its primitive state, nearly fifty tons, was transported from its native quarry, many leagues distant, to the capital, where it still forms one of the most curious monuments of Aztec science. Indeed, when we reflect on the difficulty of hewing such a stupendous mass from its hard basaltic bed without the aid of iron tools, and that of transporting it such a distance across land and water without the help of animals, we may well feel admiration at the mechanical ingenuity and enterprise of the people who accomplished it.

Not content with the spacious residence of his father, Montezuma erected another on a yet more magnificent scale. It occupied, as before mentioned, the ground partly covered by the private dwellings on one side of the *plaza mayor* of the modern city. This building, or, as it might more correctly be styled, pile of buildings, spread over an extent of ground so vast that, as one of the Conquerors assures us, its terraced roof might have afforded ample room for thirty knights to run their courses in a regular tourney. I have already noticed its interior decorations, its fanciful draperies, its roofs inlaid with cedar and other odoriferous woods, held together without a nail, and, probably, without a knowledge of the arch, its numerous and spacious apartments, which Cortés, with enthusiastic hyperbole, does not hesitate to declare superior to anything of the kind in Spain.

Adjoining the principal edifice were others, devoted to various objects. One was an armoury, filled with the weapons and military dresses worn by the Aztecs, all kept in the most perfect order, ready for instant use. The emperor was himself very expert in the management of the *maquahuitl*, or Indian sword, and took great delight in witnessing athletic exercises and the mimic representation of war by his young nobility. Another building was used as a granary, and others as warehouses for the different articles of food and apparel contributed by the districts charged with the maintenance of the royal household.

There were, also, edifices appropriated to objects of quite another kind. One of these was an immense aviary, in which birds of splendid plumage were assembled from all parts of the empire. Here was the scarlet cardinal, the golden pheasant, the endless parrot tribe with their rainbow hues (the royal green predominant), and that miniature miracle of nature, the humming-bird, which delights to revel among the honeysuckle bowers of Mexico. Three hundred attendants had charge of this aviary, who made themselves acquainted with the appropriate food of its inmates, oftentimes procured at great cost, and in the moulting season were careful to collect the beautiful plumage, which, with its many-coloured tints, furnished the materials for the Aztec painter.

A separate building was reserved for the fierce birds of prey; the voracious vulture tribes and eagles of enormous size, whose home was in the snowy solitudes of the Andes. No less than five hundred turkeys, the cheapest meat in Mexico,

were allowed for the daily consumption of these tyrants of the feathered race.

Adjoining this aviary was a menagerie of wild animals, gathered from the mountain forests, and even from the remote swamps of the *tierra caliente*. The resemblance of the different species to those in the Old World, with which no one of them, however, was identical, led to a perpetual confusion in the nomenclature of the Spaniards, as it has since done in that of better-instructed naturalists. The collection was still further swelled by a great number of reptiles and serpents remarkable for their size and venomous qualities, among which the Spaniards beheld the fiery little animal "with the castanets in his tail," the terror of the American wilderness. The serpents were confined in long cages lined with down or feathers, or in troughs of mud and water. The beasts and birds of prey were provided with apartments large enough to allow of their moving about, and secured by a strong lattice-work, through which light and air were freely admitted. The whole was placed under the charge of numerous keepers, who acquainted themselves with the habits of their prisoners and provided for their comfort and cleanliness.

THE GREAT MARKET OF THE CAPITAL

ON drawing near to the *tianguex*, or great market, the Spaniards were astonished at the throng of people pressing towards it, and on entering the place their surprise was still further heightened by the sight of the multitudes assembled there,

and the dimensions of the enclosure, thrice as large as the celebrated square of Salamanca. Here were met together traders from all parts, with the products and manufactures peculiar to their countries; the goldsmiths of Azcapozalco; the potters and jewellers of Cholula, the painters of Tezcuco, the stonecutters of Tenajocan, the hunters of Xilotepec, the fishermen of Cuitlahuac, the fruiterers of the warm countries, the mat and chair makers of Quauhtitlan, and the florists of Xochimilco,—all busily engaged in recommending their respective wares and in chaffering with purchasers.

The market-place was surrounded by deep porticoes, and the several articles had each its own quarter allotted to it. Here might be seen cotton piled up in bales, or manufactured into dresses and articles of domestic use, as tapestry, curtains, coverlets, and the like. The richly stained and nice fabrics reminded Cortés of the *alcayceta*, or silk market, of Granada. There was the quarter assigned to the goldsmiths, where the purchaser might find various articles of ornament or use formed of the precious metals, or curious toys, such as we have already had occasion to notice, made in imitation of birds and fishes, with scales and feathers alternately of gold and silver, and with movable heads and bodies. These fantastic little trinkets were often garnished with precious stones, and showed a patient, puerile ingenuity in the manufacture, like that of the Chinese.

In an adjoining quarter were collected specimens of pottery coarse and fine, vases of wood elabor-

ately carved, varnished or gilt, of curious and sometimes graceful forms. There were also hatchets made of copper alloyed with tin, the substitute, and, as it proved, not a bad one, for iron. The soldier found here all the implements of his trade : the casque fashioned into the head of some wild animal, with its grinning defences of teeth, and bristling crest dyed with the rich tint of the cochineal ; the *escaupil*, or quilted doublet of cotton, the rich surcoat of feather-mail, and weapons of all sorts, copper-headed lances and arrows, and the broad *maquahuittl*, the Mexican sword, with its sharp blades of *itztli*. Here were razors and mirrors of this same hard and polished mineral, which served so many of the purposes of steel with the Aztecs. In the square were also to be found booths occupied by barbers, who used these same razors in their vocation. For the Mexicans, contrary to the popular and erroneous notions respecting the aborigines of the New World, had beards, though scanty ones. Other shops or booths were tenanted by apothecaries, well provided with drugs, roots, and different medicinal preparations. In other places, again, blank books or maps for the hieroglyphical picture-writing were to be seen folded together like fans, and made of cotton, skins, or more commonly the fibres of the agave, the Aztec papyrus.

Under some of the porticoes they saw hides raw and dressed, and various articles for domestic or personal use made of the leather. Animals, both wild and tame, were offered for sale, and near them, perhaps, a gang of slaves, with collars

round their necks, intimating they were likewise on sale,—a spectacle unhappily not confined to the barbarian markets of Mexico, though the evils of their condition were aggravated there by the consciousness that a life of degradation might be consummated at any moment by the dreadful doom of sacrifice.

The heavier materials for building, as stone, lime, timber, were considered too bulky to be allowed a place in the square, and were deposited in the adjacent streets on the borders of the canals. It would be tedious to enumerate all the various articles, whether for luxury or daily use, which were collected from all quarters in this vast bazaar. . . Meats of all kinds, domestic poultry, game from the neighbouring mountains; fish from the lakes and streams, fruits in all the delicious abundance of these temperate regions, green vegetables and the unfailing maize. There was many a viand, too, ready dressed which sent up its savoury steams, provoking the appetite of the idle passenger, pastry, bread of the Indian corn, cakes, confectionery.

SEIZURE OF MONTEZUMA

THE Spaniards had been now a week in Mexico. During this time they had experienced the most friendly treatment from the emperor. But the mind of Cortés was far from easy. He felt that it was quite uncertain how long this amiable temper would last. A hundred circumstances might occur to change it. Montezuma might very naturally feel the maintenance of so large a

body too burdensome on his treasury, The people of the capital might become dissatisfied at the presence of so numerous an armed force within their walls. Many causes of disgust might arise betwixt the soldiers and the citizens. Indeed, it was scarcely possible that a rude, licentious soldiery like the Spaniards could be long kept in subjection without active employment. The danger was even greater with the Tlascalans, a fierce race now brought into daily contact with the nation who held them in loathing and detestation. Rumours were already rife among the allies, whether well founded or not, of murmurs among the Mexicans, accompanied by menaces of raising the bridges.

In this perplexity Cortés proposed an expedient which none but the most daring spirit in the most desperate extremity would have conceived. This was to march to the royal palace and to bring Montezuma to the Spanish quarters, by fair means if they could persuade him, by force if necessary, at all events to get possession of his person. With such a pledge, the Spaniards would be secured against the assault of the Mexicans, afraid by acts of violence to compromise the safety of their prince. If he came by his own consent, they would be deprived of all apology for so doing.

Having asked an audience from Montezuma, which was readily granted, the general made the necessary arrangements for his enterprise. The principal part of his force was drawn up in the courtyard, and he stationed a considerable detachment in the avenues leading to the palace, to check any attempt at rescue by the populace. He ordered

twenty-five or thirty of the soldiers to drop in at the palace, as if by accident, in groups of three or four at a time, while the conference was going on with Montezuma. He selected five cavaliers, in whose courage and coolness he placed most trust, to bear him company; Pedro de Alvarado, Gonzalo de Sandoval, Francisco de Lujo, Velasquez de Leon, and Alonso de Avila,—brilliant names in the annals of the Conquest. All were clad, as well as the common soldiers, in complete armour, a circumstance of too familiar occurrence to excite suspicion.

The little party were graciously received by the emperor, who soon, with the aid of the interpreters, became interested in a sportive conversation with the Spaniards, while he indulged his natural munificence by giving them presents of gold and jewels. He paid the Spanish general the particular compliment of offering him one of his daughters as his wife; an honour which the latter respectfully declined, on the ground that he was already accommodated with one in Cuba, and that his religion forbade a plurality.

When Cortés perceived that a sufficient number of his soldiers were assembled, he changed his playful manner, and in a serious tone briefly acquainted Montezuma with the treacherous proceedings in the *tierra caliente*, and the accusation of him as their author. The emperor listened to the charge with surprise, and disavowed the act, which he said could only have been imputed to him by his enemies. Cortés expressed his belief in his declaration, but added that, to prove it true, it would be necessary to send for Quauhpopoca and his

accomplices, that they might be examined and dealt with according to their deserts. To this Montezuma made no objection. Taking from his wrist, to which it was attached, a precious stone, the royal signet, on which was cut the figure of the war-god, he gave it to one of his nobles, with orders to show it to the Aztec governor, and require his instant presence in the capital, together with all those who had been accessory to the murder of the Spaniards. If he resisted, the officer was empowered to call in the aid of the neighbouring towns to enforce the mandate.

When the messenger had gone, Cortés assured the monarch that this prompt compliance with his request convinced him of his innocence. But it was important that his own sovereign should be equally convinced of it. Nothing would promote this so much as for Montezuma to transfer his residence to the palace occupied by the Spaniards, till on the arrival of Quauhpopoca the affair could be fully investigated. Such an act of condescension would, of itself, show a personal regard for the Spaniards, incompatible with the base conduct alleged against him, and would fully absolve him from all suspicion!

Montezuma listened to this proposal, and the flimsy reasoning with which it was covered, with looks of profound amazement. He became pale as death; but in a moment his face flushed with resentment, as, with the pride of offended dignity, he exclaimed, "when was it ever heard that a great prince, like myself, voluntarily left his own palace to become a prisoner in the hands of strangers!"

Cortés assured him he would not go as a

prisoner. He would experience nothing but respectful treatment from the Spaniards, would be surrounded by his own household, and hold intercourse with his people as usual. In short, it would be but a change of residence, from one of his palaces to another, a circumstance of frequent occurrence with him. It was in vain. "If I should consent to such a degradation," he answered, "my subjects never would!" When further pressed, he offered to give up one of his sons and two of his daughters to remain as hostages with the Spaniards, so that he might be spared this disgrace.

Two hours passed in this fruitless discussion, till a high-mettled cavalier, Velasquez de Leon, impatient of the long delay, and seeing that the attempt, if not the deed, must ruin them, cried out, "Why do we waste words on this barbarian? We have gone too far to recede now. Let us seize him, and, if he resists, plunge our swords into his body!" The fierce tone and menacing gestures with which this was uttered alarmed the monarch, who inquired of Marina what the angry Spaniard said. The interpreter explained it in as gentle a manner as she could, beseeching him "to accompany the white men to their quarters, where he would be treated with all respect and kindness, while to refuse them would but expose himself to violence, perhaps to death. Marina doubtless spoke to her sovereign as she thought, and no one had better opportunity of knowing the truth. This last appeal shook the resolution of Montezuma: he felt that his hour was indeed come; and with a voice scarcely audible from

emotion he consented to accompany the strangers—to quit the palace, whither he was never more to return.

The events recorded in this chapter are certainly some of the most extraordinary on the page of history. That a small body of men, like the Spaniards, should have entered the palace of a mighty prince, have seized his person in the midst of his vassals, have borne him off a captive to their quarters,—that they should have put to an ignominious death before his face his high officers, for executing, probably, his own commands, and have crowned the whole by putting the monarch in irons like a common malefactor—that this should have been done, not to a drivelling dotard in the decay of his fortunes, but to a proud monarch in the plenitude of his power, in the very heart of his capital, surrounded by thousands and tens of thousands, who trembled at his nod and would have poured out their blood like water in his defence,—that all this should have been done by a mere handful of adventurers, is a thing too extravagant, altogether too improbable, for the pages of romance! It is, nevertheless, literally true.

MONTEZUMA SWEARS ALLEGIANCE TO SPAIN

CORTÉS now felt his authority sufficiently assured to demand from Montezuma a formal recognition of the supremacy of the Spanish emperor. The Indian monarch had intimated his willingness to acquiesce in this, on their very first interview. He did not object, therefore, to call together his

principal caciques for the purpose. When they were assembled, he made them an address, briefly stating the object of the meeting. They were all acquainted, he said, with the ancient tradition that the great Being who had once ruled over the land had declared, on his departure, that he should return at some future time and resume his sway. That time had now arrived. The white men had come from the quarter where the sun rises, beyond the ocean, to which the good deity had withdrawn. They were sent by their master to reclaim the obedience of his ancient subjects. For himself, he was ready to acknowledge his authority. "You have been faithful vassals of mine," continued Montezuma, "during the many years that I have sat on the throne of my fathers. I now expect that you will show me this last act of obedience by acknowledging the great king beyond the waters to be your lord also, and that you will pay him tribute in the same manner as you have hitherto done to me." As he concluded, his voice was nearly stifled by his emotion, and the tears fell fast down his cheeks.

His nobles, many of whom, coming from a distance, had not kept pace with the changes which had been going on in the capital, were filled with astonishment as they listened to his words and beheld the voluntary abasement of their master, whom they had hitherto revered as the omnipotent lord of Anahuac. They were the more affected, therefore, by the sight of his distress. His will, they told him, had always been their law. It should be so now; and, if he thought the sovereign of the strangers was the

ancient lord of their country, they were willing to acknowledge him as such still. The oaths of allegiance were then administered with all due solemnity, attested by the Spaniards present, and a full record of the proceedings was drawn up by the royal notary, to be sent to Spain. There was something deeply touching in the ceremony by which an independent and absolute monarch, in obedience less to the dictates of fear than of conscience, thus relinquished his hereditary rights in favour of an unknown and mysterious power. It even moved those hard men who were thus unscrupulously availing themselves of the confiding ignorance of the natives; and, though "it was in the regular way of their own business," says an old chronicler, "there was not a Spaniard who could look on the spectacle with a dry eye!"

The rumour of these strange proceedings were soon circulated through the capital and the country. Men read in them the finger of Providence. The ancient tradition of Quetzalcoatl was familiar to all; and where it had slept scarcely noticed in the memory, it was now revived with many exaggerated circumstances. It was said to be part of the tradition that the royal line of the Aztecs was to end with Montezuma; and his name, the literal signification of which is "sad" or "angry lord," was construed into an omen of his evil destiny.

Having thus secured this great feudatory to the crown of Castile, Cortés suggested that it would be well for the Aztec chief to send his sovereign such a gratuity as would conciliate his goodwill by convincing him of the loyalty of his new vassals. Montezuma consented that his collectors should visit

the principal cities and provinces, attended by a number of Spaniards, to receive the customary tributes, in the name of the Castilian sovereign. In a few weeks most of them returned, bringing back large quantities of gold and silver plate, rich stuffs, and the various commodities in which the taxes were usually paid.

To this store Montezuma added, on his own account, the treasure of Axayacatl, previously noticed, some part of which had been already given to the Spaniards. It was the fruit of long and careful hoarding,—of extortion, it may be,—by a prince who little dreamed of its final destination. When brought into the quarters, the gold alone was sufficient to make three great heaps. It consisted partly of native grains; part had been melted into bars; but the greatest portion was in utensils, and various kinds of ornaments and curious toys, together with imitations of birds, insects, or flowers, executed with uncommon truth and delicacy. There were, also, quantities of collars, bracelets, wands, fans, and other trinkets, in which the gold and feather-work were richly powdered with pearls and precious stones. Many of the articles were even more admirable for the workmanship than for the value of the materials; such, indeed,—if we may take the report of Cortés to one who would himself have soon an opportunity to judge of its veracity, and whom it would not be safe to trifle with,—as no monarch in Europe could boast in his dominions!

Magnificent as it was, Montezuma expressed his regret ~~that~~ the treasure was no larger. But he had diminished it, he said, by his former gifts to

the white men. "Take it," he added, "Malinche, and let it be recorded in your annals that Montezuma sent this present to your master."

The Spaniards gazed with greedy eyes on the display of riches, now their own, which far exceeded all hitherto seen in the New World, and fell nothing short of the *El Dorado* which their glowing imaginations had depicted. It may be that they felt somewhat rebuked by the contrast which their own avarice presented to the princely munificence of the barbarian chief. At least, they seemed to testify their sense of his superiority by the respectful homage which they rendered him, as they poured forth the fulness of their gratitude. They were not so scrupulous, however, as to manifest any delicacy in appropriating to themselves the donative, a small part of which was to find its way into the royal coffers. They clamoured loudly for an immediate division of the spoil, which the general would have postponed till the tributes from the remoter provinces had been gathered in. The goldsmiths of Azcapozalco were sent for to take in pieces the larger and coarser ornaments, leaving untouched those of more delicate workmanship. Three days were consumed in this labour, when the heaps of gold were cast into ingots and stamped with the royal arms.

DANGER FOR THE SPANIARDS

Not many days elapsed, however, before Cortés received an invitation, or rather a summons, from the emperor to attend him in his apartment. The general went with some feelings of anxiety and distrust, taking with him Olid, captain of the

guard, and two or three other trusty cavaliers. Montezuma received them with cold civility, and, turning to the general, told him that all his predictions had come to pass. The gods of his country had been offended by the violation of their temples. They had threatened the priests that they would forsake the city if the sacrilegious strangers were not driven from it, or rather sacrificed on the altars in expiation of their crimes. The monarch assured the Christians it was from regard for their safety that he communicated this; and, "if you have any regard for it yourselves," he concluded, "you will leave the country without delay. I have only to raise my finger, and every Aztec in the land will rise in arms against you." There was no reason to doubt his sincerity. For Montezuma, whatever evils had been brought on him by the white men, held them in reverence as a race more highly gifted than his own, while for several, as we have seen, he had conceived an attachment, flowing, no doubt, from their personal attentions and deference to himself.

Cortés was too much master of his feelings to show how far he was startled by this intelligence. He replied, with admirable coolness, that he should regret much to leave the capital so precipitately, when he had no vessels to take him from the country. If it were not for this, there could be no obstacle to his leaving it at once. He should also regret another step to which he should be driven, if he quitted it under these circumstances,—that of taking the emperor along with him.

Montezuma was evidently troubled by this last suggestion. He inquired how long it would take

to build the vessels, and finally consented to send a sufficient number of workmen to the coast, to act under the orders of the Spaniards; meanwhile, he would use his authority to restrain the impatience of the people, under the assurance that the white men would leave the land when the means for it were provided. He kept his word. A large body of Aztec artisans left the capital with the most experienced Castilian ship-builders, and, descending to Vera Cruz, began at once to fell the timber and build a sufficient number of ships to transport the Spaniards back to their own country. The work went forward with apparent alacrity. But those who had the direction of it, it is said, received private instructions from the general to interpose as many delays as possible, in hopes of receiving in the meantime such reinforcements from Europe as would enable him to maintain his ground.

The whole aspect of things was now changed in the Castilian quarters. Instead of the security and repose in which the troops had of late indulged, they felt a gloomy apprehension of danger, not the less oppressive to the spirits that it was scarcely visible to the eye;—like the faint speck just descried above the horizon by the voyager in the tropics, to the common gaze seeming only a summer cloud, but which to the experienced mariner bodes the coming of the hurricane. Every precaution that prudence could devise was taken to meet it. The soldier, as he threw himself on his mats for repose, kept on his armour. He ate, drank, slept, with his weapons by his side. His horse stood ready caparisoned,

day and night, with the bridle hanging at the saddle-bow. The guns were carefully planted so as to command the great avenues. The sentinels were doubled, and every man, of whatever rank, took his turn in mounting guard. The garrison was in a state of siege.

REVOLT OF THE MEXICANS

SHORTLY after, Cortés, at the suggestion, it is said, of Montezuma, released his brother Cuitlahua, lord of Iztapalapan, who, it will be remembered, had been seized on suspicion of co-operating with the chief of Tezcuco in his meditated revolt. It was thought he might be of service in allaying the present tumult and bringing the populace to a better state of feeling. But he returned no more to the fortress. He was a bold, ambitious prince, and the injuries he had received from the Spaniards rankled deep in his bosom. He was presumptive heir to the crown, which, by the Aztec laws of succession, descended much more frequently in a collateral than in a direct line. The people welcomed him as the representative of their sovereign, and chose him to supply the place of Montezuma during his captivity. Cuitlahua willingly accepted the post of honour and of danger. He was an experienced warrior, and exerted himself to reorganise the disorderly levies and to arrange a more efficient plan of operations. The effect was soon visible.

Cortés meanwhile had so little doubt of his ability to overawe the insurgents, that he wrote to that effect to the garrison of Villa Rica by the

same despatches in which he informed them of his safe arrival in the capital. But scarcely had his messenger been gone half an hour, when he returned breathless with terror and covered with wounds. "The city," he said, "was all in arms! The drawbridges were raised, and the enemy would soon be upon them!" He spoke truth. It was not long before a hoarse, sullen sound became audible, like that of the roaring of distant waters. It grew louder and louder; till, from the parapet surrounding the enclosure, the great avenues which led to it might be seen dark with the masses of warriors, who came rolling on in a confused tide towards the fortress. At the same time, the terraces and *azoteas* or flat roofs, in the neighbourhood, were thronged with combatants brandishing their missiles, who seemed to have risen up as if by magic! It was a spectacle to appal the stoutest.

The palace of Axayacatl in which the Spaniards were quartered, was as the reader will remember a vast irregular pile of stone buildings, having but one floor, except in the centre, where another story was added. A vast area stretched around encompassed by a wall of no great height. This was supported by towers and bulwarks at certain intervals which gave it some degree of strength . . . sufficient to resist the rude battering enginery of the Indians. The parapet had been pierced here and there with embrasures for the artillery, which consisted of thirteen guns, and smaller apertures were made in other parts for the convenience of the arquebusiers. No sooner did the trumpet call to arms as the approach of

the enemy was announced, than every soldier was at his post, the cavalry mounted, the artillery men at their guns, and the archer and arquebusiers stationed so as to give the assailants a warm reception.

On they came, with the companies, or irregular masses, into which the multitude was divided, rushing forward each in its own dense column, with many a gay banner displayed, and many a bright gleam of light reflected from helmet, arrow, and spear-head, as they were tossed about in their disorderly array. As they drew near the enclosure, the Aztecs set up a hideous yell, or rather that shrill whistle used in fight by the nations of Anahuac, which rose far above the sound of shell and atabal and their other rude instruments of warlike melody. They followed this by a tempest of missiles,—stones, darts, and arrows,—which fell thick as rain on the besieged, while volleys of the same kind descended from the crowded terraces in the neighbourhood.

The Spaniards waited until the foremost column had arrived within the best distance for giving effect to their fire, when a general discharge of artillery and arquebuses swept the ranks of the assailants and mowed them down by hundreds. The Mexicans were familiar with the report of these formidable engines as they had been harmlessly discharged on some holiday festival; but never till now had they witnessed their murderous power. They stood aghast for a moment, as with bewildered looks they staggered under the fury of the fire; but, soon rallying, the bold barbarians

uttered a piercing cry, and rushed forward over the prostrate bodies of their comrades. A second and a third volley checked their career, and threw them into disorder, but still they pressed on, letting off clouds of arrows; while their comrades on the roofs of the houses took more deliberate aim at the combatants in the courtyard. The Mexicans were particularly expert in the use of the sling; and the stones which they hurled from their elevated positions on the heads of their enemies did even greater execution than the arrows. They glanced, indeed, from the mail-covered bodies of the cavaliers, and from those who were sheltered under the cotton panoply, or *escaupil*. But some of the soldiers, especially the veterans of Cortés, and many of their Indian allies, had but slight defences, and suffered greatly under this stony tempest.

The Aztecs, meanwhile, had advanced close under the walls of the intrenchment, their ranks broken and disordered and their limbs mangled by the unintermitting fire of the Christians. But they still pressed on, under the very muzzles of the guns. They endeavoured to scale the parapet, which, from its moderate height, was in itself a work of no great difficulty. But the moment they showed their heads above the rampart they were shot down by the unerring marksmen within, or stretched on the ground by a blow of the Tlascalan *maquahuil*. Nothing daunted, others soon appeared to take the place of the fallen, and strove by raising themselves on the writhing bodies of their dying comrades, or by fixing their spears in the crevices of the wall, to

surmount the barrier. But the attempt proved equally vain.

Defeated here, they tried to effect a breach in the parapet by battering it with heavy pieces of timber. The works were not constructed on those scientific principles by which one part is made to overlook and protect another. The besiegers, therefore, might operate at their pleasure, with but little molestation from the garrison within, whose guns could not be brought into a position to bear on them, and who could mount no part of their own works for their defence without exposing their persons to the missiles of the whole besieging army. The parapet, however, proved too strong for the efforts of the assailants. In their despair, they endeavoured to set the Christian quarters on fire, shooting burning arrows into them, and climbing up so as to dart their firebrands through the embrasures. The principal edifice was of stone. But the temporary defences of the Indian allies, and other parts of the exterior works, were of wood. Several of these took fire, and the flame spread rapidly among the light, combustible materials. This was a disaster for which the besieged were wholly unprepared. They had little water, scarcely enough for their own consumption. They endeavoured to extinguish the flames by heaping on earth. But in vain. Fortunately, the great building was of materials which defied the destroying element. But the fire raged in some of the outworks, connected with the parapet, with a fury which could only be checked by throwing down a part of the wall itself, thus

laying open a formidable breach. This, by the general's order, was speedily protected by a battery of heavy guns, and a file of arquebusiers, who kept up an incessant volley through the opening on the assailants.

The fight now raged with fury on both sides. The walls around the palace belched forth an unintermitting sheet of flame and smoke. The groans of the wounded and dying were lost in the fiercer battle-cries of the combatants, the roar of the artillery, the sharper rattle of the musketry, and the hissing sound of Indian missiles. It was the conflict of the European with the American; of civilized man with the barbarian; of the science of the one with the rude weapons and warfare of the other. And as the ancient walls of Tenochtitlan shook under the thunders of the artillery, it announced that the white man, the destroyer, had set his foot within her precincts. Night at length came and threw her friendly mantle over the contest. The Aztec seldom fought by night.

Before the sun had shot his beams into the Castilian quarters, the enemy were in motion, evidently preparing to renew the assault of the preceding day. The Spanish commander determined to anticipate them by a vigorous sortie, for which he had already made the necessary dispositions. A general discharge of ordnance and musketry sent death far and wide into the enemy's ranks, and, before they had time to recover from their confusion, the gates were thrown open, and Cortés, sallying out at the head of his cavalry, supported by a large body of infantry and several thousand Tlascalans, rode at full gallop against

them. Taken thus by surprise, it was scarcely possible to offer much resistance. Those who did were trampled down under the horses' feet, cut to pieces with the broadswords, or pierced with the lances of the riders. The infantry followed up the blow, and the rout for the moment was general.

But the Aztecs fled only to take refuge behind a barricade, or strong work of timber and earth, which had been thrown across the great street through which they were pursued. Rallying on the other side, they made a gallant stand, and poured in turn a volley of their light weapons on the Spaniards, who, saluted with a storm of missiles at the same time from the terraces of the houses, were checked in their career and thrown into some disorder.

Cortés, thus impeded, ordered up a few pieces of heavy ordnance, which soon swept away the barricades and cleared a passage for the army. But it had lost the momentum acquired in its rapid advance. The enemy had time to rally and to meet the Spaniards on more equal terms. They were attacked in flank, too, as they advanced, by fresh battalions, who swarmed in from the adjoining streets and lanes. The canals were alive with boats filled with warriors, who with their formidable darts searched every crevice or weak place in the armour of proof, and made havoc on the unprotected bodies of the Tlascalans. By repeated and vigorous charges, the Spaniards succeeded in driving the Indians before them; though many, with a desperation which showed they loved vengeance better than life, sought to embarrass the movements of their horses by cling-

ing to their legs, or, more successfully, strove to pull the riders from their saddles. And woe to the unfortunate cavalier who was thus dismounted, to be dispatched by the brutal *maquahuatl*, or to be dragged on board a canoe to the bloody altar of sacrifice!

The day was now far spent. The Spaniards had been everywhere victorious. But the enemy, though driven back on every point, still kept the field. When broken by the furious charges of the cavalry, he soon rallied behind the temporary defences, which, at different intervals, had been thrown across the streets, and, facing about, renewed the fight with undiminished courage, till the sweeping away of the barriers by the cannon of the assailants left a free passage for the movements of their horse. Thus the action was a succession of rallying and retreating, in which both parties suffered much, although the loss inflicted on the Indians was probably tenfold greater than that of the Spaniards. But the Aztecs could better afford the loss of a hundred lives than their antagonists that of one. And, while the Spaniards showed an array broken and obviously thinned in numbers, the Mexican army, swelled by the tributary levies which flowed in upon it from the neighbouring streets, exhibited, with all its losses, no sign of diminution. At length, sated with carnage, and exhausted by toil and hunger, the Spanish commander drew off his men, and sounded a retreat.

The undaunted Aztecs hung on the rear of their retreating foes, annoying them at every step by fresh flights of stones and arrows; and, when

the Spaniards had re-entered their fortress, the Indian host encamped around it, showing the same dogged resolution as on the preceding evening. Though true to their ancient habits of inaction during the night, they broke the stillness of the hour by insulting cries and menaces, which reached the ears of the besieged. "The gods have delivered you, at last, into our hands," they said; "Huitzilopochtli has long cried for his victims. The stone of sacrifice is ready. The knives are sharpened. The wild beasts in the palace are roaring for their offal. And the cages," they added, taunting the Tlascalans with their leanness, "are waiting for the false sons of Anahuac, who are to be fattened for the festival!" These dismal menaces, which sounded fearfully in the ears of the besieged, who understood too well their import, were mingled with piteous lamentations for their sovereign, whom they called on the Spaniards to deliver up to them.

THE FATE OF MONTEZUMA

CORTÉS suffered much from a severe wound which he had received in the hand in the late action. But the anguish of his mind must have been still greater as he brooded over the dark prospect before him. He had mistaken the character of the Mexicans. Their long and patient endurance had been a violence to their natural temper, which, as their whole history proves, was arrogant and ferocious beyond that of most of the races of Anahuac. The restraint which, in deference to their monarch more than to their own fears, they

had so long put on their natures, being once removed, their passions burst forth with accumulated violence. The Spaniards had encountered in the Tlascalan an open enemy, who had no grievance to complain of, no wrong to redress. He fought under the vague apprehension only of some coming evil to his country. But the Aztec, hitherto the proud lord of the land, was goaded by insult and injury, till he had reached that pitch of self-devotion which made life cheap in comparison with revenge. Armed thus with the energy of despair, the savage is almost a match for the civilized man; and a whole nation, moved to its depths by a common feeling, which swallows up all selfish considerations of personal interest and safety, becomes, whatever be its resources, like the earthquake and the tornado, the most formidable among the agencies of nature.

Considerations of this kind may have passed through the mind of Cortés, as he reflected on his own impotence to restrain the fury of the Mexicans, and resolved, in despite of his late supercilious treatment of Montezuma, to employ his authority to allay the tumult,—an authority so successfully exerted in behalf of Alvarado at an earlier stage of the insurrection. He was the more confirmed in his purpose on the following morning, when the assailants, redoubling their efforts, succeeded in scaling the works in one quarter and effecting an entrance into the enclosure. It is true, they were met with so resolute a spirit that not a man of those who entered was left alive. But, in the impetuosity of the assault, it seemed, for a few moments, as if the place was to be carried by storm.

Cortés now sent to the Aztec emperor to request his interposition with his subjects in behalf of the Spaniards. But Montezuma was not in the humour to comply. He had remained moodily in his quarters ever since the general's return. Disgusted with the treatment he had received, he had still further cause for mortification in finding himself the ally of those who were the open enemies of his nation. From his apartment he had beheld the tragical scenes in his capital, and seen another, the presumptive heir to his throne, taking the place which he should have occupied at the head of his warriors and fighting the battles of his country. Distressed by his position, indignant at those who had placed him in it, he coldly answered, "What have I to do with Malinche? I do not wish to hear from him. I desire only to die. To what a state has my willingness to serve him reduced me!" When urged still further to comply by Olid and Father Olmedo, he added, "It is of no use. They will neither believe me, nor the false words and promises of Malinche. You will never leave these walls alive." On being assured, however, that the Spaniards would willingly depart if a way were opened to them by their enemies, he at length—moved, probably, more by the desire to spare the blood of his subjects than of the Christians—consented to expostulate with his people.

In order to give the greater effect to his presence, he put on his imperial robes. The *tilmatli*, his mantle of white and blue, flowed over his shoulders, held together by its rich clasp of the green *chalchiviltl*. The same precious gem,

with emeralds of uncommon size, set in gold, profusely ornamented other parts of his dress. His feet were shod with the golden sandals, and his brows covered by the *copilli*, or Mexican diadem, resembling in form the pontifical tiara. Thus attired, and surrounded by a guard of Spaniards and several Aztec nobles, and preceded by the golden wand, the symbol of sovereignty, the Indian monarch ascended the central turret of the palace. His presence was instantly recognized by the people, and, as the royal retinue advanced along the battlements, a change, as if by magic, came over the scene. The clang of instruments, the fierce cries of the assailants, were hushed, and a deathlike stillness pervaded the whole assembly, so fiercely agitated, but a few moments before, by the wild tumult of war! Many prostrated themselves on the ground; others bent the knee; and all turned with eager expectation towards the monarch whom they had been taught to reverence with slavish awe, and from whose countenance they had been wont to turn away as from the intolerable splendours of divinity. Montezuma saw his advantage; and while he stood thus confronted with his awestruck people, he seemed to recover all his former authority and confidence, as he felt himself to be still a king. With a calm voice, easily heard over the silent assembly, he is said by the Castilian writers to have thus addressed them:—

“Why do I see my people here in arms against the palace of my fathers? Is it that you think your sovereign a prisoner, and wish to release him? If so, you have acted rightly. But you are

mistaken. I am no prisoner. The strangers are my guests. I remain with them only from choice, and can leave them when I list. Have you come to drive them from the city? That is unnecessary. They will depart of their own accord, if you will open a way for them. Return to your homes, then. Lay down your arms. Show your obedience to me, who have a right to it. The white men shall go back to their own land; and all shall be well again within the walls of Tenochtitlan."

As Montezuma announced himself the friend of the detested strangers, a murmur ran through the multitude; a murmur of contempt for the pusillanimous prince who could show himself so insensible to the insults and injuries for which the nation was in arms. The swollen tide of their passions swept away all the barriers of ancient reverence, and, taking a new direction, descended on the head of the unfortunate monarch, so far degenerated from his warlike ancestors. "Base Aztec," they exclaimed, "woman, coward! the white men have made you a woman,—fit only to weave and spin!" These bitter taunts were soon followed by still more hostile demonstrations. A chief, it is said, of high rank, bent a bow or brandished a javelin with an air of defiance against the emperor, when, in an instant, a cloud of stones and arrows descended on the spot where the royal train was gathered. The Spaniards appointed to protect his person had been thrown off their guard by the respectful deportment of the people during their lord's address. They now hastily interposed their bucklers. But it

was too late. Montezuma was wounded by three of the missiles, one of which, a stone, fell with such violence on his head, near the temple, as brought him senseless to the ground. The Mexicans, shocked at their own sacrilegious act, experienced a sudden revulsion of feeling, and, setting up a dismal cry, dispersed, panic-struck, in different directions. Not one of the multitudinous array remained in the great square before the palace!

The unhappy prince, meanwhile, was borne by his attendants to his apartments below. On recovering from the insensibility caused by the blow, the wretchedness of his condition broke upon him. He had tasted the last bitterness of degradation. He had been reviled, rejected, by his people. The meanest of the rabble had raised their hands against him. He had nothing more to live for. It was in vain that Cortés and his officers endeavoured to soothe the anguish of his spirit and fill him with better thoughts. He spoke not a word in answer. His wound, though dangerous, might still, with skilful treatment, not prove mortal. But Montezuma refused all the remedies prescribed for it. He tore off the bandages as often as they were applied, maintaining, all the while, the most determined silence. He sat with eyes dejected, brooding over his fallen fortunes, over the image of ancient majesty and present humiliation. He had survived his honour. But a spark of his ancient spirit seemed to kindle in his bosom, as it was clear he did not mean to survive his disgrace. From this painful scene the Spanish general and his followers were

soon called away by the new dangers which menaced the garrison.

DEATH OF MONTEZUMA

THE Indian monarch had rapidly declined, since he had received his injury, sinking, however, quite as much under the anguish of a wounded spirit as under disease. He continued in the same moody state of insensibility as that already described; holding little communication with those around him, deaf to consolation, obstinately rejecting all medical remedies as well as nourishment. Perceiving his end approach, some of the cavaliers present in the fortress, whom the kindness of his manners had personally attached to him, were anxious to save the soul of the dying prince from the sad doom of those who perish in the darkness of unbelief. They accordingly waited on him, with Father Olmedo at their head, and in the most earnest manner implored him to open his eyes to the error of his creed, and consent to be baptized. But Montezuma—whatever may have been suggested to the contrary—seems never to have faltered in his hereditary faith, or to have contemplated becoming an apostate; for surely he merits that name in its most odious application, who, whether Christian or pagan, renounces his religion without conviction of its falsehood. Indeed, it was a too implicit reliance on its oracles which had led him to give such easy confidence to the Spaniards. His intercourse with them had, doubtless, not sharpened his desire to embrace their communion; and the calamities of his

country he might consider as sent by his gods to punish him for his hospitality to those who had desecrated and destroyed their shrines.

When Father Olmedo, therefore, kneeling at his side, with the uplifted crucifix, affectionately besought him to embrace the sign of man's redemption, he coldly repulsed the priest, exclaiming, "I have but a few moments to live, and will not at this hour desert the faith of my fathers." One thing, however, seemed to press heavily on Montezuma's mind. This was the fate of his children, especially of three daughters, whom he had by his two wives; for there were certain rites of marriage which distinguished the lawful wife from the concubine. Calling Cortés to his bedside, he earnestly commended these children to his care, as "the most precious jewels that he could leave him." He besought the general to interest his master, the emperor, in their behalf, and to see that they should not be left destitute, but be allowed some portion of their rightful inheritance. "Your lord will do this," he concluded, "if it were only for the friendly offices I have rendered the Spaniards, and for the love I have shown them,—though it has brought me to this condition! But for this I bear them no ill-will." Such, according to Cortés himself, were the words of the dying monarch. Not long after, on the 30th of June 1520, he expired in the arms of some of his own nobles, who still remained faithful in their attendance on his person. "Thus," exclaims a native historian, one of his enemies, a Tlascalan, "thus died the unfortunate Montezuma, who had swayed

the sceptre with such consummate policy and wisdom, and who was held in greater reverence and awe than any other prince of his lineage, or any, indeed, that ever sat on the throne in this Western World. With him may be said to have terminated the royal line of the Aztecs, and the glory to have passed away from the empire, which under him had reached the zenith of its prosperity." "The tidings of his death," says the old Castilian chronicler, Diaz, "were received with real grief by every cavalier and soldier in the army who had had access to his person; for we all loved him as a father,—and no wonder, seeing how good he was." This simple but emphatic testimony to his desert, at such a time, is in itself the best refutation of the suspicions occasionally entertained of his fidelity to the Christians.

Montezuma, at the time of his death, was about forty-one years old, of which he reigned eighteen. His person and manners have been already described. He left a numerous progeny by his various wives, most of whom, having lost their consideration after the Conquest, fell into obscurity, as they mingled with the mass of the Indian population. Two of them, however, a son and a daughter, who embraced Christianity, became the founders of noble houses in Spain.

SPANIARDS DECIDE TO EVACUATE THE CITY OF MEXICO

THERE was no longer any question as to the expediency of evacuating the capital. The only doubt was as to the time of doing so, and the

route. The Spanish commander called a council of officers to deliberate on these matters. It was his purpose to retreat on Tlascala, and in that capital to decide, according to circumstances, on his future operations. After some discussion, they agreed on the causeway of Tlacopan as the avenue by which to leave the city. It would, indeed, take them back by a circuitous route, considerably longer than either of those by which they had approached the capital. But, for that reason, it would be less likely to be guarded, at least suspected; and the causeway itself, being shorter than either of the other entrances, would sooner place the army in comparative security on the mainland.

These views were fortified, it is said, by the counsels of a soldier named Botello, who professed the mysterious science of judicial astrology. He had gained credit with the army by some predictions which had been verified by the events; those lucky hits which make chance pass for calculation with the credulous multitude. This man recommended to his countrymen by all means to evacuate the place in the night, as the hour most propitious to them, although he should perish in it. The general's first care was to provide for the safe transportation of the treasure. Many of the common soldiers had converted their share of the prize into gold chains, collars, and like ornaments, which they easily carried about their persons. But the royal fifth, together with the share of Cortés himself, and much of the rich booty of the principal cavaliers, had been converted into bars and wedges of solid gold, and deposited in one of

the strong apartments of the palace. Cortés delivered the share belonging to the Crown to the royal officers, assigning them one of the strongest horses, and a guard of Castilian soldiers to transport it. Still much of the treasure belonging both to the Crown and to individuals was necessarily abandoned from the want of adequate means of conveyance. The metal lay scattered in shining heaps along the floor, exciting the cupidity of the soldiers.

Cortés next arranged the order of march. The van, composed of two hundred Spanish foot, he placed under the command of the valiant Gonzalo de Sandoval, supported by Diego de Ordaz, Francisco de Lujó, and about twenty other cavaliers. The rear-guard, constituting the strength of the infantry, was intrusted to Pedro de Alvarado and Velasquez de Leon. The general himself took charge of the "battle," or centre, in which went the baggage, some of the heavy guns, most of which, however, remained in the rear, the treasure and the prisoners. These consisted of a son and two daughters of Montezuma, Cacama, the deposed lord of Tezcuco, and several other nobles, whom Cortés retained as important pledges in his future negotiations with the enemy. The Tlascalans were distributed pretty equally among the three divisions; and Cortés had under his immediate command a hundred picked soldiers, his own veterans most attached to his service, who, with Cristóval de Olid, Francisco de Morla, Alonso de Avila, and two or three other cavaliers, formed a select corps, to act wherever occasion might require.

The general had already superintended the construction of a portable bridge to be laid over the open canals in the causeway. This was given in charge to an officer named Magarino, with forty soldiers under his orders, all pledged to defend the passage to the last extremity. The bridge was to be taken up when the entire army had crossed one of the breaches, and transported to the next. There were three of these openings in the causeway, and most fortunate would it have been for the expedition if the foresight of the commander had provided the same number of bridges. But the labour would have been great, and time was short.

At midnight the troops were under arms, in readiness for the march. Mass was performed by Father Olmedo, who invoked the protection of the Almighty through the awful perils of the night. The gates were thrown open, and on the first of July 1520 the Spaniards for the last time sallied forth from the walls of the ancient fortress, the scene of so much suffering and such indomitable courage.

“THE NOCHE TRISTE—THE LAMENTABLE NIGHT.”

THE night was cloudy, and a drizzling rain, which fell without intermission, added to the obscurity. The great square before the palace was deserted, as, indeed, it had been since the fall of Montezuma. Steadily, and as noiselessly as possible, the Spaniards held their way along the great street of Tlacopan, which so lately

had resounded with the tumult of battle. All was now hushed in silence; but the Mexicans were not all asleep. As the Spaniards drew near the spot where the street opened on the causeway, and were preparing to lay the portable bridge across the uncovered breach, which now met their eyes, several Indian sentinels, who had been stationed at this, as at the other approaches to the city, took the alarm, and fled, rousing their countrymen by their cries. The priests, keeping their night-watch on the summit of the *teocallis*, instantly caught the tidings and sounded their shells, while the huge drum in the desolate temple of the war-god sent forth those solemn tones, which, heard only in seasons of calamity, vibrated through every corner of the capital. The Spaniards saw that no time was to be lost. The bridge was brought forward and fitted with all possible expedition. Sandoval was the first to try its strength, and, riding across, was followed by his little body of chivalry, his infantry, and Tlascalan allies, who formed the first division of the army. Then came Cortés and his squadrons, with the baggage, ammunition-waggon, and a part of the artillery. But before they had time to defile across the narrow passage, a gathering sound was heard, like that of a mighty forest agitated by the winds. It grew louder and louder, while on the dark waters of the lake was heard a plashing noise, as of many oars. Then came a few stones and arrows striking at random among the hurrying troops. They fell every moment faster and more furious, till they thickened into a terrible tempest, while the very heavens were

rent with the yells and war-cries of myriads of combatants, who seemed all at once to be swarming over land and lake!

The Spaniards pushed steadily on through this arrowy sleet, though the barbarians, dashing their canoes against the sides of the causeway, clambered up and broke in upon their ranks. But the Christians, anxious only to make their escape, declined all combat except for self-preservation. The cavaliers, spurring forward their steeds, shook off their assailants and rode over their prostrate bodies, while the men on foot with their good swords or the butts of their pieces drove them headlong again down the sides of the dike.

But the advance of several thousand men, marching, probably, on a front of not more than fifteen or twenty abreast, necessarily required much time, and the leading files had already reached the second breach in the causeway before those in the rear had entirely traversed the first. Here they halted, as they had no means of effecting a passage, smarting all the while under unintermitting volleys from the enemy, who were clustered thick on the waters around this second opening. Sorely distressed, the van-guard sent repeated messages to the rear to demand the portable bridge. At length the last of the army had crossed, and Magarino and his sturdy followers endeavoured to raise the ponderous framework. But it stuck fast in the sides of the dike. In vain they strained every nerve. The weight of so many men and horses, and above all of the heavy artillery, had wedged the timbers so firmly in the stones and earth that it was

beyond their power to dislodge them. Still they laboured amidst a torrent of missiles, until, many of them slain, and all wounded, they were obliged to abandon the attempt.

The tidings soon spread from man to man, and no sooner was their dreadful import comprehended than a cry of despair arose, which for a moment drowned all the noise of conflict. All means of retreat were cut off. Scarcely hope was left. The only hope was in such desperate exertions as each could make for himself. Order and subordination were at an end. Intense danger produced intense selfishness. Each thought only of his own life. Pressing forward, he trampled down the weak and the wounded, heedless whether it were friend or foe. The leading files, urged on by the rear, were crowded on the brink of the gulf. Sandoval, Ordaz, and the other cavaliers dashed into the water. Some succeeded in swimming their horses across. Others failed, and some who reached the opposite bank, being overturned in the ascent, rolled headlong with their steeds into the lake. The infantry followed pellmell, heaped promiscuously on one another, frequently pierced by the shafts or struck down by the war-clubs of the Aztecs; while many an unfortunate victim was dragged half stunned on board their canoes, to be reserved for a protracted but more dreadful death.

The carnage raged fearfully along the length of the causeway. Its shadowy bulk presented a mark of sufficient distinctness for the enemy's missiles, which often prostrated their own countrymen in the blind fury of the tempest. Those

nearest the dike, running their canoes alongside with a force that shattered them to pieces, leaped on the land, and grappled with the Christians, until both came rolling down the side of the causeway together. But the Aztec fell among his friends, while his antagonist was borne away in triumph to the sacrifice. The struggle was long and deadly. The Mexicans were recognized by their white cotton tunics, which showed faint through the darkness. Above the combatants rose a wild and discordant clamour, in which horrid shouts of vengeance were mingled with groans of agony with invocations of the saints and the blessed Virgin, and with the screams of women; for there were several women, both natives and Spaniards, who had accompanied the Christian camp. Among these, one named María de Estrada is particularly noticed for the courage she displayed, battling with broadsword and target like the stanchest of the warriors.

The opening in the causeway, meanwhile, was filled up with the wreck of matter which had been forced into it, ammunition-waggon, heavy-guns, bales of rich stuffs scattered over the waters, chests of solid ingots, and bodies of men and horses, till over this dismal ruin a passage was gradually formed, by which those in the rear were enabled to clamber to the other side. Cortés, it is said, found a place that was fordable, where, halting, with the water up to his saddle-girths, he endeavoured to check the confusion, and lead his followers by a safer path to the opposite bank. But his voice was lost in the wild uproar, and finally, hurrying on with the tide, he pressed

forwards with a few trusty cavaliers, who remained near his person, to the van; but not before he had seen his favourite page, Juan de Salazar, struck down, a corpse, by his side. Here he found Sandoval and his companions, halting before the third and last breach, endeavouring to cheer on their followers to surmount it. But their resolution faltered. It was wide and deep; though the passage was not so closely beset by the enemy as the preceding ones. The cavaliers again set the example by plunging into the water. Horse and foot followed as they could, some swimming, others with dying grasp clinging to the manes and tails of the struggling animals. Those fared best, as the general had predicted, who travelled lightest; and many were the unfortunate wretches who, weighed down by the fatal gold which they loved so well, were buried with it in the salt floods of the lake. Cortés, with his gallant comrades, Olid, Morla, Sandoval, and some few others, still kept in the advance, leading his broken remnant off the fatal causeway. The din of battle lessened in the distance; when the rumour reached them that the rear-guard would be wholly overwhelmed without speedy relief. It seemed almost an act of desperation; but the generous hearts of the Spanish cavaliers did not stop to calculate danger when the cry for succour reached them. Turning their horses' bridles, they galloped back to the theatre of action, worked their way through the press, swam the canal, and placed themselves in the thick of the *mêlée* on the opposite bank.

The first grey of the morning was now coming

over the waters. It showed the hideous confusion of the scene which had been shrouded in the obscurity of night. The dark masses of combatants, stretching along the dike, were seen struggling for mastery, until the very causeway on which they stood appeared to tremble, and reel to and fro, as if shaken by an earthquake; while the bosom of the lake, as far as the eye could reach, was darkened by canoes crowded with warriors, whose spears and bludgeons, armed with blades of "volcanic glass," gleamed in the morning light.

The cavaliers found Alvarado unhorsed, and defending himself with a poor handful of followers against an overwhelming tide of the enemy. His good steed, which had borne him through many a hard fight, had fallen under him. He was himself wounded in several places, and was striving in vain to rally his scattered column, which was driven to the verge of the canal by the fury of the enemy, then in possession of the whole rear of the causeway, where they were reinforced every hour by fresh combatants from the city. The artillery in the earlier part of the engagement had not been idle, and its iron shower, sweeping along the dike, had mowed down the assailants by hundreds. But nothing could resist their impetuosity. The front ranks, pushed on by those behind, were at length forced up to the pieces, and, pouring over them like a torrent, overthrew men and guns in one general ruin. The resolute charge of the Spanish cavaliers, who had now arrived, created a temporary check, and gave time for their countrymen to make a feeble rally.

But they were speedily borne down by the returning flood. Cortés and his companions were compelled to plunge again into the lake,—though all did not escape. Alvarado stood on the brink for a moment, hesitating what to do. Unhorsed as he was, to throw himself into the water, in the face of the hostile canoes that now swarmed around the opening, afforded but a desperate chance of safety. He had but a second for thought. He was a man of powerful frame, and despair gave him unnatural energy. Setting his long lance firmly on the wreck which strewed the bottom of the lake, he sprung forward with all his might, and cleared the wide gap at a leap? Aztecs and Tlascalans gazed in stupid amazement, exclaiming, as they beheld the incredible feat, “This is truly the *Tonatiuh*,—the child of the Sun!” The breadth of the opening is not given. But it was so great that the valorous captain Diaz, who well remembered the place, says the leap was impossible to any man.

Cortés and his companions now rode forward to the front, where the troops, in a loose, disorderly manner, were marching off the fatal causeway. A few only of the enemy hung on their rear, or annoyed them by occasional flights of arrows from the lake. The attention of the Aztecs was diverted by the rich spoil which strewed the battle-field. The Spaniards . . . but little molested were allowed to defile through the adjacent village of Popotla.

THE TERRIBLE BATTLE OF OTUMBA

BEFORE reaching the friendly State of the Tlascalans, the little band of the Spaniards had to fight the great battle of Otumba.

As the army was climbing the mountain steeps which shut in the valley of Otompan, the vedettes came in with the intelligence that a powerful body was encamped on the other side, apparently awaiting their approach. The intelligence was soon confirmed by their own eyes, as they turned the crest of the sierra, and saw spread out, below, a mighty host, filling up the whole depth of the valley, and giving to it the appearance, from the white cotton mail of the warriors, of being covered with snow. It consisted of levies from the surrounding country, and especially the populous territory of Tezcucó, drawn together at the instance of Cuitlahuac, Montezuma's successor, and now concentrated on this point to dispute the passage of the Spaniards. Every chief of note had taken the field with his whole array gathered under his standard, proudly displaying all the pomp and rude splendour of his military equipment. As far as the eye could reach, were to be seen shields and waving banners, fantastic helmets, forests of shining spears, the bright feather-mail of the chief, and the coarse cotton panoply of his follower, all mingled together in wild confusion and tossing to and fro like the billows of a troubled ocean. It was a sight to fill the stoutest heart among the Christians with dismay, heightened by the previous expectation of soon reaching the

friendly land which was to terminate their wearisome pilgrimage. Even Cortés, as he contrasted the tremendous array before him with his own diminished squadrons, wasted by disease and enfeebled by hunger and fatigue, could not escape the conviction that his last hour had arrived.

But his was not the heart to despond and he gathered strength from the very extremity of his situation. He had no room for hesitation, for there was no alternative left to him. To escape was impossible. . . . He then addressed to his troops a few words of encouragement, as customary with him on the eve of an engagement.

It was a solemn moment, that in which the devoted little band, with steadfast countenances and their usual intrepid step, descended on the plain to be swallowed up, as it were, in the vast ocean of their enemies. The latter rushed on with impetuosity to meet them, making the mountains ring to their discordant yells and battle-cries, and sending forth volleys of stones and arrows which for a moment shut out the light of day. But, when the leading files of the two armies closed, the superiority of the Christians was felt, as their antagonists, falling back before the charges of cavalry, were thrown into confusion by their own numbers who pressed on them from behind. The Spanish infantry followed up the blow, and a wide lane was opened in the ranks of the enemy, who, receding on all sides, seemed willing to allow a free passage for their opponents. But it was to return on them with accumulated force, as rallying they poured upon the Christians, envelop-

ing the little army on all sides, which, with its bristling array of long swords and javelins, stood firm,—in the words of a contemporary,—like an islet against which the breakers, roaring and surging, spend their fury in vain. The struggle was desperate of man against man. The Tlascalan seemed to renew his strength, as he fought almost in view of his own native hills; as did the Spaniard, with the horrible doom of the captive before his eyes. Well did the cavaliers do their duty on that day; charging in little bodies of four or five abreast, deep into the enemy's ranks, riding over the broken files, and by this temporary advantage giving strength and courage to the infantry. Not a lance was there which did not reek with the blood of the infidel. Among the rest, the young captain Sandoval is particularly commemorated for his daring prowess. Managing his fiery steed with easy horsemanship, he darted, when least expected, into the thickest of the *mêlée* overturning the stanchest warriors, and rejoicing in danger as if it were his natural element.

But these gallant displays of heroism served only to engulf the Spaniards deeper and deeper in the mass of the enemy, with scarcely any more chance of cutting their way through his dense and interminable battalions than of hewing a passage with their swords through the mountains. Many of the Tlascalans and some of the Spaniards had fallen, and not one but had been wounded. Cortés himself had received a second cut on the head, and his horse was so much injured that he was compelled to dismount, and take one from the baggage train, a strong-boned animal, who carried

him well through the turmoil of the day. The contest had now lasted several hours. The sun rode high in the heavens, and shed an intolerable fervour over the plain. The Christians, weakened by previous suffering, and faint with loss of blood, began to relax in their desperate exertions. Their enemies, constantly supported by fresh relays from the rear, were still in good heart, and, quick to perceive their advantage, pressed with redoubled force on the Spaniards. The horse fell back, crowded on the foot; and the latter, in vain seeking a passage amidst the dusky throngs of the enemy, who now closed up the rear, were thrown into some disorder. The tide of battle was setting rapidly against the Christians. The fate of the day would soon be decided; and all that now remained for them seemed to be to sell their lives as dearly as possible.

At this critical moment, Cortés, whose restless eye had been roving round the field in quest of any object that might offer him the means of arresting the coming ruin, rising in his stirrups, descried at a distance, in the midst of the throng, the chief who from his dress and military cortége he knew must be the commander of the barbarian forces. He was covered with a rich surcoat of feather-work; and a panache of beautiful plumes, gorgeously set in gold and precious stones, floated above his head. Rising above this, and attached to his back, between the shoulders, was a short staff bearing a golden net for a banner,—the singular, but customary, symbol of authority for an Aztec commander. The cacique, whose name was Cihuaca, was borne on a litter, and a

body of young warriors, whose gay and ornamented dresses showed them to be the flower of the Indian nobles, stood round as a guard of his person and the sacred emblem.

The eagle eye of Cortés no sooner fell on this personage than it lighted up with triumph. Turning quickly round to the cavaliers at his side, among whom were Sandoval, Olid, Alvarado, and Avila, he pointed out the chief, exclaiming, "There is our mark! Follow and support me!" Then, crying his war-cry, and striking his iron heel into his weary steed, he plunged headlong into the thickest of the press. His enemies fell back, taken by surprise and daunted by the ferocity of the attack. Those who did not were pierced through with his lance or borne down by the weight of his charger. The cavaliers followed close in the rear. On they swept with the fury of a thunderbolt, cleaving the solid ranks asunder, strewing their path with the dying and the dead, and bounding over every obstacle in their way. In a few minutes they were in the presence of the Indian commander, and Cortés, overturning his supporters, sprang forward with the strength of a lion, and, striking him through with his lance, hurled him to the ground. A young cavalier, Juan de Salamanca, who had kept close by his general's side, quickly dismounted and despatched the fallen chief. Then, tearing away his banner, he presented it to Cortés, as a trophy to which he had the best claim. It was all the work of a moment. The guard, overpowered by the suddenness of the onset, made little resistance, but, flying, communicated their own panic to

their comrades. The tidings of the loss soon spread over the field. The Indians, filled with consternation, now thought only of escape. In their blind terror, their numbers augmented their confusion. They trampled on one another, fancying it was the enemy in their rear.

The Spaniards and Tlascalans were not slow to avail themselves of the marvellous change in their affairs. Their fatigue, their wounds, hunger, thirst, all were forgotten in the eagerness for vengeance; and they followed up the flying foe, dealing death at every stroke, and taking ample retribution for all they had suffered in the bloody marches of Mexico. Long did they pursue, till, the enemy having abandoned the field, they returned, sated with slaughter, to glean the booty which he had left.

THE RE-CAPTURE OF THE CITY OF MEXICO

WINNING THE OUTPOSTS

THE two principal avenues to Mexico, those on the south and the west, were now occupied by the Christians. There still remained a third, the great dike of Tepejacac, on the north, which, indeed, taking up the principal street, that passed in a direct line through the heart of the city, might be regarded as a continuation of the dike of Iztapalapan. By this northern route a means of escape was still left open to the besieged, and they availed themselves of it, at present, to maintain their communications with the country

and to supply themselves with provisions. This, however, was now blocked.

The street on which the Spaniards now entered was the great avenue that intersected the town from north to south, and the same by which they had first visited the capital. It was broad and perfectly straight, and, in the distance, dark masses of warriors might be seen gathering to the support of their countrymen, who were prepared to dispute the further progress of the Spaniards. The sides were lined with buildings, the terraced roofs of which were also crowded with combatants, who, as the army advanced, poured down a pitiless storm of missiles on their heads, which glanced harmless, indeed, from the coat of mail, but too often found their way through the more common *escarpil* of the soldier, already gaping with many a ghastly rent. Cortés, to rid himself of this annoyance for the future, ordered his Indian pioneers to level the principal buildings as they advanced; in which work of demolition, no less than in the repair of the breaches, they proved of inestimable service.

The Spaniards, meanwhile, were steadily, but slowly, advancing, as the enemy recoiled before the rolling fire of musketry, though turning, at intervals, to discharge their javelins and arrows against their pursuers. In this way they kept along the great street until their course was interrupted by a wide ditch or canal, once traversed by a bridge, of which only a few planks now remained. These were broken by the Indians the moment they had crossed, and a formidable array of spears was instantly seen bristling over

the summit of a solid rampart of stone, which protected the opposite side of the canal. Cortés was no longer supported by his brigantines, which the shallowness of the canals prevented from penetrating into the suburbs. He brought forward his arquebusiers, who, protected by the targets of their comrades, opened a fire on the enemy. But the balls fell harmless from the bulwarks of stone ; while the assailants presented but too easy a mark to their opponents.

The general then caused the heavy guns to be brought up, and opened a lively cannonade, which soon cleared a breach in the works, through which the musketeers and crossbowmen poured in their volleys thick as hail. The Indians now gave way in disorder, having held their antagonists at bay for two hours. It was a spot too familiar to the Spaniards. On one side stood the palace of Axayacatl, their old quarters, the scene to many of them of much suffering. Opposite was the pile of low irregular buildings once the residence of the unfortunate Montezuma ; while a third side of the square was flanked by the Coatepantli or Wall of Serpents, which encompassed the great *teocalli* with its little city of holy edifices. The Spaniards halted at the entrance to the square, as if oppressed by bitter recollections, but their intrepid leader, impatient at their hesitation, loudly called on them to advance before the Aztecs had time to rally : and grasping his target in one hand and waving his sword high above his head with the other he cried his war cry of "San Jago" and led them at once against the enemy.

The Mexicans, intimidated by the presence of their detested foe who, in spite of all their efforts, had again forced his way into the heart of their city, made no further resistance but retreated or rather fled for refuge into the sacred enclosure of the *teocalli*, where the numerous buildings scattered over its ample area afforded many good points of defence. A few priests clad in their usual wild and blood-stained vestments, were to be seen lingering on the terraces which wound round the stately sides of the pyramid chanting hymns in honour of their God and encouraging the warriors below to battle bravely for its altars.

The Spaniards poured through the open gates into the area and a small party rushed up the winding corridors to its summit. No vestige now remained there of the Cross, or of any other symbol of the pure faith to which it had been dedicated. A new effigy of the Aztec war-god had taken the place of the one demolished by the Christians and raised its fantastic and hideous form in the same niche which had been occupied by its predecessor. The Spaniards soon tore away its golden mask and the rich jewels with which it was bedizened, and, hurling the struggling priests down the sides of the pyramid, made the best of their way to their comrades in the area. It was full time.

The Aztecs, indignant at the sacrilegious outrage perpetrated before their eyes, and gathering courage from the inspiration of the place, under the very presence of their deities, raised a yell of horror and vindictive fury, as, throwing themselves into something like order, they sprang, by

a common impulse, on the Spaniards. The latter, who had halted near the entrance, though taken by surprise, made an effort to maintain their position at the gateway. But in vain; for the headlong rush of the assailants drove them at once into the square, where they were attacked by other bodies of Indians, pouring in from the neighbouring streets. Broken, and losing their presence of mind, the troops made no attempt to rally, but, crossing the square, and abandoning the cannon, planted there, to the enemy, they hurried down the great street of Iztapalapan. Here they were soon mingled with the allies, who choked up the way, and who, catching the panic of the Spaniards, increased the confusion, while the eyes of the fugitives, blinded by the missiles that rained on them from the *azoteas*, were scarcely capable of distinguishing friend from foe. In vain Cortés endeavoured to stay the torrent, and to restore order. His voice was drowned in the wild uproar, as he was swept away, like driftwood, by the fury of the current.

All seemed to be lost;—when suddenly sounds were heard in an adjoining street, like the distant tramp of horses galloping rapidly over the pavement. They drew nearer and nearer, and a body of cavalry soon emerged on the great square. Though but a handful in number, they plunged boldly into the thick of the enemy. We have often had occasion to notice the superstitious dread entertained by the Indians of the horse and his rider. And, although the long residence of the cavalry in the capital had familiarized the natives in some measure with their presence, so

long a time had now elapsed since they had beheld them that all their former mysterious terrors revived in full force; and, when thus suddenly assailed in flank by the formidable apparition, they were seized with a panic and fell into confusion. It soon spread to the leading files, and Cortés, perceiving his advantage, turned with the rapidity of lightning, and, at this time supported by his followers, succeeded in driving the enemy with some loss back into the enclosure.

It was now the hour of vespers, and, as night must soon overtake them, he made no further attempt to pursue his advantage, and ordered the trumpets to sound a retreat. The Aztecs hung on the closing files and though driven back by frequent charges of cavalry still followed in the distance, shooting off their ineffectual missiles and filling the air with wild cries and howlings like a herd of ravenous wolves disappointed of their prey.

RECAPTURE OF THE CITY OF MEXICO

A WAR OF EXTERMINATION

CORTÉS prepared to make another attack upon the capital, and that before it should have time to recover from the former. He would willingly have spared the inhabitants, if he could have brought them to terms, but he saw them with regret, as he says, thus desperately bent on a war of extermination. He conceived that there would be no way more likely to affect their minds than by destroying at once some of the principal edifices, which they were accus-

tomed to venerate as the pride and ornament of the city.

Marching into the great square, he selected, as the first to be destroyed, the old palace of Axayacatl, his former barracks. The ample range of low buildings was, it is true, constructed of stone; but the interior, as well as the outworks, the turrets, and roofs, was of wood. The Spaniards, whose associations with the pile were of so gloomy a character, sprang to the work of destruction with a satisfaction like that which the French mob may have felt in the demolition of the Bastile. Torches and firebrands were thrown about in all directions; the lower parts of the building were speedily on fire, which, running along the inflammable hangings and wood-work of the interior, rapidly spread to the second floor. There the element took freer range, and, before it was visible from without, sent up from every aperture and crevice a dense column of vapour, that hung like a funeral pall over the city. This was dissipated by a bright sheet of flame, which enveloped all the upper regions of the vast pile, till, the supporters giving way, the wide range of turreted chambers fell, amidst clouds of dust and ashes, with an appalling crash, that for a moment stayed the Spaniards in the work of devastation.

It was but for a moment. On the other side of the square, adjoining Montezuma's residence, were several buildings, as the reader is aware, appropriated to animals. One of these was now marked for destruction,—the House of Birds, filled with specimens of all the painted varieties which swarmed over the wide forests of Mexico.

Its feathered inhabitants either perished in the fire, or those of stronger wing, bursting the burning lattice-work of the aviary, soared high into the air, and, fluttering for a while over the devoted city, fled with loud screams to their native forests beyond the mountains.

The Aztecs gazed with inexpressible horror on this destruction of the venerable abode of their monarchs and of the monuments of their luxury and splendour. Their rage was exasperated almost to madness as they beheld their hated foes the Tlascalans busy in the work of desolation, and aided by the Tezcucans, their own allies, and not unfrequently their kinsmen. They vented their fury in bitter execrations.

The Spanish commander, having accomplished the work of destruction, sounded a retreat, sending on the Indian allies, who blocked up the way before him. The Mexicans, maddened by their losses, in wild transports of fury hung close on his rear, and, though driven back by the cavalry, still returned throwing themselves desperately under the horses, striving to tear the riders from their saddles and content to throw away their own lives for one blow at their enemy.

The Aztec emperor conducted his operations on a systematic plan, which showed some approach to military science. He not unfrequently made simultaneous attacks on the three several divisions of the Spaniards established on the causeways, and on the garrisons at their extremities. To accomplish this, he enforced the service not merely of his own militia of the capital, but of the great towns in the neighbourhood, who all

moved in concert, at the well-known signal of the beacon-fire, or of the huge drum struck by the priests on the summit of the temple. One of these general attacks, it was observed, whether from accident or design, took place on the eve of St John the Baptist, the anniversary of the day on which the Spaniards made their second entry into the Mexican capital.

Notwithstanding the severe drain on his forces by this incessant warfare, the young monarch contrived to relieve them in some degree by different detachments, which took the place of one another. This was apparent from the different uniforms and military badges of the Indian battalions that successively came and disappeared from the field. At night a strict guard was maintained in the Aztec quarters, a thing not common with the nations of the plateau. The outposts of the hostile armies were stationed within sight of each other. That of the Mexicans was usually placed in the neighbourhood of some wide breach, and its position was marked by a large fire in front. The hours for relieving guard were intimated by the shrill Aztec whistle, while bodies of men might be seen moving behind the flame, which threw a still ruddier glow over the cinnamon-coloured skins of the warriors.

ASSAULT ON THE CITY OF MEXICO

DEFEAT OF THE SPANIARDS

On the appointed morning, the two armies, after the usual celebration of mass, advanced along

their respective causeways against the city. They were supported, in addition to the brigantines, by a numerous fleet of Indian boats, which were to force a passage up the canals, and by a countless multitude of allies, whose very numbers served in the end to embarrass their operations. After clearing the suburbs, three avenues presented themselves, which all terminated in the square of Tlatelolco. The principal one, being of much greater width than the other two, might rather be called a causeway than a street, since it was flanked by deep canals on either side. Cortés divided his force into three bodies. One of them he placed under Alderete, with orders to occupy the principal street. A second he gave in charge to Andrés de Tápia and Jorge de Alvarado; the former a cavalier of courage and capacity, the latter a younger brother of Don Pedro, and possessed of the intrepid spirit which belonged to that chivalrous family. These were to penetrate by one of the parallel streets, while the general himself, at the head of the third division, was to occupy the other. A small body of cavalry, with two or three field-pieces, was stationed as a reserve in front of the great street of Tacuba, which was designated as the rallying-point for the different divisions.

Cortés gave the most positive instructions to his captains not to advance a step without securing the means of retreat by carefully filling up the ditches and the openings in the causeway. The arrangements being completed the three divisions marched at once up the several streets. Cortés dismounting took the van of his own squadron, at

the head of his infantry. The Mexicans fell back as he advanced making less resistance than usual. Indeed the very facility of his success led the general to suspect that he might be advancing too fast. He received more than one message from Alderete, the treasurer, informing him that he had nearly gained the market. This only increased the general's apprehension that in the rapidity of his advance he might have neglected to secure the ground. He determined to trust no eyes but his own and taking a small body of troops proceeded at once to reconnoitre the route followed by the treasurer.

He had not proceeded far along the great street or causeway when his progress was arrested by an opening ten or twelve paces wide and filled with water at least two fathoms deep, by which a communication was formed between the canals on the opposite sides. A feeble attempt had been made to stop the gap with the rubbish of the causeway but in too careless a manner to be of the least service, and a few straggling stones and pieces of timber showed that the work had been abandoned almost as soon as begun. To add to his consternation the general observed that the sides of the causeway in this neighbourhood had been pared off very recently.

He saw in all this the artifice of his cunning enemy Guatemozin. After the death of Montezuma, his brother Cuitlahua, lord of Izlapalapan, conformably to the usage regulating the succession had been chosen to succeed him. Cuitlahua was a man of great experience in military affairs, but he only survived his election four months

when he died of small-pox. The choice of the electors fell on Guatemozin, the nephew of the two last monarchs. He was not more than twenty-five years of age, valiant and so terrible that his followers trembled in his presence. He did not shrink from the perilous post offered to him, and as he saw the tempest gathering he prepared to meet it like a man. Though young he had ample experience in military matters and bore a sort of religious hatred to the Spaniards, like that which Hannibal is said to have sworn against his Roman foes.

Deeply alarmed, Cortés set about repairing the mischief as fast as he could by ordering his men to fill up the yawning chasm, but they had scarcely begun their labours when the hoarse echoes of conflict in the distance were succeeded by a hideous sound of mingled yells and war-whoops, that seemed to rend the very heavens. This was followed by a rushing noise, as of the tread of thronging multitudes, showing that the tide of battle was turned back from its former course, and was rolling on towards the spot where Cortés and his little band of cavaliers were planted.

His conjecture proved too true. Alderete had followed the retreating Aztecs with an eagerness which increased with every step of his advance. He had carried the barricades which had defended the breach, without much difficulty, and, as he swept on, gave orders that the opening should be stopped. But the blood of the high-spirited cavaliers was warmed by the chase, and no one cared to be detained by the ignoble occupation of filling up the ditches, while he could

gather laurels so easily in the fight; and they all pressed on. In this way they suffered themselves to be decoyed into the heart of the city; when suddenly the horn of Guatemozin—the sacred symbol, heard only in seasons of extraordinary peril—sent forth a long and piercing note from the summit of a neighbouring *teocalli*. In an instant the flying Aztecs, as if maddened by the blast, wheeled about, and turned on their pursuers. Warriors from the adjoining street and lanes poured in upon the flanks of the assailants, filling the air with the fierce, unearthly cries which had reached the ears of Cortés, and drowning, for a moment the wild dissonance which reigned in the other quarters of the capital.

The army, taken by surprise, and shaken by the fury of the assault, was thrown into the utmost disorder. Friends and foes, white men and Indians, were mingled together in one promiscuous mass. On they came, like a rushing torrent sweeping along some steep declivity, and rolling in one confused tide towards the open breach, on the further side of which stood Cortés and his companions horror-struck at the sight of the approaching ruin. The foremost files soon plunged into the gulf, treading one another under the flood, some striving ineffectually to swim, others, with more success, to clamber over the heaps of their suffocated comrades. Many, as they attempted to scale the opposite sides of the slippery dike, fell into the water, or were hurried off by the warriors in the canoes, who added to the horrors of the rout by the fresh storm of darts and javelins which they poured on the fugitives.

Cortés, meanwhile, with his brave followers, kept his station undaunted on the other side of the breach. "I had made up my mind," he says, "to die rather than desert my poor followers in their extremity!" With outstretched hands he endeavoured to rescue as many as he could from the watery grave, and from the more appalling fate of captivity. Darts, stones, and arrows fell around him thick as hail, but glanced harmless from his steel helmet and armour of proof. At length a cry of "Malinche," "Malinche," arose among the enemy; and six of their number, strong and athletic warriors, rushing on him at once, made a violent effort to drag him on board their boat. In the struggle he received a severe wound in the leg, which for the time disabled it. There seemed to be no hope for him; when a faithful follower, Cristóval de Olea, perceiving his general's extremity, threw himself on the Aztecs, and with a blow cut off the arm of one savage, and then plunged his sword in the body of another. He was quickly supported by a comrade named Lerma, and by a Tlascalan chief, who fighting over the prostrate body of Cortés, despatched three more of the assailants; though the heroic Olea paid dearly for his self-devotion, as he fell mortally wounded by the side of his general.

The report soon spread among the soldiers that their commander was taken; and Quiñones, the captain of his guard, with several others, pouring in to the rescue, succeeded in disentangling Cortés from the grasp of his enemies, who were struggling with him in the water, and, raising him in their arms, placed him again on the causeway.

The general still lingered where he thought he could be of use, until the faithful Quiñones taking Cortés's horse by the bridle turned his head from the breach exclaiming that his master's life "was too important to the army to be thrown away there."

Yet it was no easy matter to force a passage through the press. The fierce barbarians followed the Spaniards to their very entrenchments. Here they were met first by the Cross-fire of the brigantines, which, dashing through the palisades planted to obstruct them, completely enfiladed the causeway, and next by that of a small battery erected in front of the camp which under the management of a skilful engineer, swept the whole length of the defile. Thus galled on front and flank the Aztecs were forced to give way and seek shelter.

THE SIEGE OF THE CITY OF MEXICO

FATE OF SPANISH CAPTIVES

It was late in the afternoon when Sandoval reached his quarters. The sun was still lingering above the western hills and poured his beams wide over the Valley, lighting up the old towers and temples of Tenochtitlan with a mellow radiance that little harmonised with the scenes of strife in which the city had been so lately involved. The tranquillity of the hour, however, was on a sudden broken by the strange sounds of the great drum in the temple of the war-god—sounds which

recalled the *noche triste*, with all its terrible images, to the minds of the Spaniards, for that was the only occasion on which they had ever heard them. They intimated some solemn act of religion within the unhallowed precincts of the *teocalli*; and the soldiers, startled by the mournful vibrations, which might be heard for leagues across the Valley, turned their eyes to the quarter whence they proceeded. They there beheld a long procession winding up the huge sides of the pyramid; for the camp of Alvarado was pitched scarcely a mile from the city, and objects are distinctly visible at a great distance in the transparent atmosphere of the table-land.

As the long file of priests and warriors reached the flat summit of the *teocalli*, the Spaniards saw the figures of several men stripped to their waists, some of whom, by the whiteness of their skins, they recognized as their own countrymen. They were the victims for sacrifice. Their heads were gaudily decorated with coronals of plumes, and they carried fans in their hands. They were urged along by blows, and compelled to take part in the dances in honour of the Aztec war-god. The unfortunate captives, then stripped of their sad finery, were stretched, one after another, on the great stone of sacrifice. On its convex surface their breasts were heaved up conveniently for the diabolical purpose of the priestly executioner, who cut asunder the ribs by a strong blow with his sharp razor of *itzli*, and, thrusting his hand into the wound, tore away the heart, which, hot and reeking, was deposited on the golden censer before the idol. The body of the slaughtered victim

was then hurled down the steep stairs of the pyramid, which, it may be remembered, were placed at the same angle of the pile, one flight below another; and the mutilated remains were gathered up by the savages beneath, who soon prepared with them the cannibal repast which completed the work of abomination.

We may imagine with what sensations the stupefied Spaniards must have gazed on this horrid spectacle, so near that they could almost recognize the persons of their unfortunate friends, see the struggles and writhing of their bodies, hear—or fancy that they heard—their screams of agony! yet so far removed that they could render them no assistance.

THE SIEGE OF THE CITY OF MEXICO

TERRIBLE SUFFERINGS OF THE AZTECS

THE siege operations had consumed several weeks, so that it was now drawing towards the latter part of July. During this time the blockade had been maintained with the utmost rigour, and the wretched inhabitants were suffering all the extremities of famine. Some few stragglers were taken, from time to time, in the neighbourhood of the Christian camp, whither they had wandered in search of food. They were kindly treated, by command of Cortés, who was in hopes to induce others to follow their example, and thus to afford a means of conciliating the inhabitants, which might open the way to their submission. But few were found willing to leave the shelter of the

capital, and they preferred to take their chance with their suffering countrymen rather than trust themselves to the mercies of the besiegers.

From these few stragglers, however, the Spaniards heard a dismal tale of woe respecting the crowded population in the interior of the city. All the ordinary means of sustenance had long since failed, and they now supported life as they could, by means of such roots as they could dig from the earth, by gnawing the bark of trees, by feeding on the grass,—on anything, in short, however loathsome, that could allay the craving of appetite. Their only drink was the brackish water of the soil saturated with the salt lake. Under this unwholesome diet, and the diseases engendered by it, the population was gradually wasting away. Men sickened and died every day, in all the excruciating torments produced by hunger, and the wan and emaciated survivors seemed only to be waiting for their time.

The Spaniards had visible confirmation of all this as they penetrated deeper into the city and approached the district of Tlatelolco, now occupied by the besieged. They found the ground turned up in quest of roots and weeds, the trees stripped of their green stems, their foliage, and their bark. Troops of famished Indians flitted in the distance, gliding like ghosts among the scenes of their former residence. Dead bodies lay unburied in the streets and courtyards, or filled up the canals. It was a sure sign of the extremity of the Aztecs; for they held the burial of the dead as a solemn and imperative duty.

As the invaders entered the dwellings a more

appalling spectacle presented itself—the floors covered with the prostrate forms of the miserable inhabitants, some in the agonies of death, others dead and festering in their corruption; men, women and children inhaling the poisonous atmosphere and mingled promiscuously together; mothers with their infants in their arms perishing of hunger before their eyes while they were unable to give them the nourishment of nature; men crippled by their wounds and with their bodies frightfully mangled, vainly attempting to crawl away as the enemy entered.

There was no occasion to resort to artificial means to precipitate the ruin of the Aztecs. They wandered about in search of anything, however unwholesome or revolting, that might mitigate the fierce gnawings of hunger. Some hunted for insects and worms on the borders of the lake, or gathered the salt weeds and moss from its bottom, while at times they might be seen casting a wistful look at the green hills beyond, which many of them had left to share the fate of their brethren in the capital.

But all was not sufficient, and hundreds of famished wretches died every day from extremity of suffering. Some dragged themselves into the houses, and drew their last breath alone and in silence. Others sank down in the public streets. Wherever they died, there they were left. There was no one to bury or to remove them. Familiarity with the spectacle made men indifferent to it. They looked on in dumb despair, waiting for their own turn. There was no complaint, no lamentation, but deep, unutterable woe,

If in other quarters of the town the corpses might be seen scattered over the streets, here they were gathered in heaps. "They lay so thick," says Bernal Diaz, "that one could not tread except among the bodies." "A man could not set his foot down," says Cortés, yet more strongly, "unless on the corpse of an Indian." They were piled one upon another, the living mingled with the dead. They stretched themselves on the bodies of their friends, and lay down to sleep there. Death was everywhere. The city was a vast charnel house in which everything was hastening to decay and decomposition.

The people called on the priests to invoke the gods on their behalf. But the oracles were dumb or gave only gloomy responses. Their deities had deserted them and in their place they saw signs of celestial wrath, telling of still greater woes in store. Many after the siege declared that among other prodigies, they beheld a stream of light of a blood-red colour, coming from the north in the direction of Tepejacac, with a rushing noise like that of a whirlwind, which swept round the district of Tlatelolco, darting out sparkles and flakes of fire, till it shot far into the centre of the lake! In the disordered state of their nerves a mysterious fear took possession of their senses. Prodigies were of familiar occurrence, and the most familiar phenomena of nature were converted into prodigies. Stunned by their calamities, reason was bewildered, and they became the sport of the wildest and most superstitious fancies.

In the midst of these awful scenes, the young emperor of the Aztecs remained, according to all

accounts, calm and courageous. With his fair capital laid in ruins before his eyes, his nobles and faithful subjects dying around him, his territory rent away, foot by foot, till scarce enough remained for him to stand on, he rejected every invitation to capitulate, and showed the same indomitable spirit as at the commencement of the siege. When Cortés, in the hope that the extremities of the besieged would incline them to listen to an accommodation, persuaded a noble prisoner to bear to Guatemozin his proposals to that effect, the fierce young monarch, according to the general, ordered him at once to be sacrificed. It is a Spaniard, we must remember, who tells the story.

Cortés, who had suspended hostilities for several days, in the vain hope that the distresses of the Mexicans would bend them to submission, now determined to drive them to it by a general assault. Cooped up as they were within a narrow quarter of the city, their position favoured such an attempt. He commanded Alvarado to hold himself in readiness, and directed Sandoval—who, besides the causeway, had charge of the fleet, which lay off the Tlatelolcan district—to support the attack by a cannonade on the houses near the water. He then led his forces into the city, or rather across the horrid waste that now encircled it.

On entering the Indian precincts, he was met by several of the chiefs, who, stretching forth their emaciated arms, exclaimed, "You are the children of the Sun. But the Sun is swift in his course. Why are you, then, so tardy? Why do you delay so long to put an end to our miseries? Rather kill us at once, that we may go to our god

Huitzilopochtli, who waits for us in heaven to give us rest from our sufferings ! ”

Cortés was moved by their piteous appeal, and answered that he desired not their death, but their submission. “ Why does your master refuse to treat with me,” he said, “ when a single hour will suffice for me to crush him and all his people ? ”

CAPTURE OF MEXICO AND END OF THE WAR

CORTÉS having learned that the Mexicans were busy in preparations for defence, he made immediate dispositions for the assault. The confederates had been left without the walls ; for he did not care to bring them within sight of the quarry before he was ready to slip the leash. He now ordered them to join him, and supported by Alvarado’s division, marched at once into the enemy’s quarters. He found them prepared to receive him. Their most able-bodied warriors were thrown into the van, covering their feeble and crippled comrades. Women were seen occasionally mingling in the ranks, and, as well as children, thronged the *azoteas*, where, with famine-sticken visages and haggard eyes, they scowled defiance and hatred on their invaders.

As the Spaniards advanced, the Mexicans set up a fierce war-cry, and sent off clouds of arrows with their accustomed spirit, while the women and boys rained down darts and stones from their elevated position on the terraces. But the missiles were sent by hands too feeble to do much damage ; and, when the squadrons closed, the loss of

strength became still more sensible in the Aztecs. Their blows fell feebly and with doubtful aim, though some it is true, of stronger constitution, or gathering strength from despair, maintained to the last a desperate fight.

The arquebusiers now poured in a deadly fire. The brigantines replied by successive volleys, in the opposite quarter. The besieged, hemmed in, like deer surrounded by the huntsmen, were brought down on every side. The carnage was horrible. The ground was heaped up with slain, until the maddened combatants were obliged to climb over the human mounds to get at one another. The miry soil was saturated with blood, which ran off like water and dyed the canals themselves with crimson. All was uproar and terrible confusion. The hideous yells of the barbarians, the oaths and execrations of the Spaniards, the cries of the wounded, the shrieks of women and children, the heavy blows of the Conquerors, the death-struggle of their victims, the rapid, reverberating echoes of musketry, the hissing of innumerable missiles, the crash and crackling of blazing buildings, crushing hundreds in their ruins, the blinding volumes of dust and sulphurous smoke shrouding all in their gloomy canopy, made a scene appalling even to the soldiers of Cortés, steeled as they were by many a rough passage of war, and by long familiarity with blood and violence. "The piteous cries of the women and children, in particular," says the general, "were enough to break one's heart." He commanded that they should be spared, and that all who asked it should receive quarter. He particu-

larly urged this on the confederates, and placed Spaniards among them to restrain their violence. But he had set an engine in motion too terrible to be controlled. It were as easy to curb the hurricane in its fury, as the passions of an infuriated horde of savages. "Never did I see so pitiless a race," he exclaims, "or anything wearing the form of man so destitute of humanity." They made no distinction of sex or age, and in this hour of vengeance seemed to be requiting the hoarded wrongs of a century. At length, sated with slaughter, the Spanish commander sounded a retreat.

On the following morning the Spanish commander again mustered his forces, having decided to follow up the blow of the preceding day before the enemy should have time to rally, and at once to put an end to the war. He had arranged with Alvarado, on the evening previous, to occupy the market-place of Tlatelolco; and the discharge of an arquebuse was to be the signal for a simultaneous assault. Sandoval was to hold the northern causeway, and, with the fleet, to watch the movements of the Indian emperor, and to intercept the flight to the mainland, which Cortés knew he meditated.

It was the memorable thirteenth of August 1521, the day of St Hippolytus,—from this circumstance selected as the patron saint of modern Mexico,—that Cortés led his warlike array for the last time across the black and blasted environs which lay around the Indian capital. On entering the Aztec precincts, he paused, willing to afford its wretched inmates one more chance of escape before striking the fatal blow. He obtained an

interview with some of the principal chiefs, and expostulated with them on the conduct of their prince. "He surely will not," said the general, "see you all perish, when he can so easily save you." He then urged them to prevail on Guatemozin to hold a conference with him, repeating the assurances of his personal safety.

The messengers went on their mission, and soon returned with the *cihuacoatl* at their head, a magistrate of high authority among the Mexicans. He said, with a melancholy air, in which his own disappointment was visible, that "Guatemozin was ready to die where he was, but would hold no interview with the Spanish commander;" adding, in a tone of resignation, "it is for you to work your pleasure." "Go, then," replied the stern Conqueror, "and prepare your countrymen for death. Their hour is come."

When the assailants came into the presence of the enemy, they found them huddled together in the utmost confusion, all ages and sexes, in masses so dense that they nearly forced one another over the brink of the causeways into the water below. Some had climbed on the terraces, others feebly supported themselves against the walls of the buildings. Their squalid and tattered garments gave a wildness to their appearance which still further heightened the ferocity of their expression, as they glared on their enemy with eyes in which hate was mingled with despair. When the Spaniards had approached within bowshot, the Aztecs let off a flight of impotent missiles, showing to the last the resolute spirit, though they had lost the strength, of their better days. The fatal

signal was then given by the discharge of an arquebuse,—speedily followed by peals of heavy ordnance, the rattle of firearms, and the hellish shouts of the confederates as they sprang upon their victims. It is unnecessary to stain the page with a repetition of the horrors of the preceding day. Some of the wretched Aztecs threw themselves into the water and were picked up by the canoes. Others sank and were suffocated in the canals. The number of these became so great that a bridge was made of their dead bodies, over which the assailants could climb to the opposite banks. Others again, especially the women, begged for mercy, which, as the chroniclers assure us, was everywhere granted by the Spaniards, and, contrary to the instructions and entreaties of Cortés, everywhere refused by the confederates.

CAPTURE OF GUATEMOZIN

WHILE this work of butchery was going on, numbers were observed pushing off in the barks that lined the shore, and making the best of their way across the lake. They were constantly intercepted by the brigantines, which broke through the flimsy array of boats, sending off their volleys to the right and left, as the crews of the latter hotly assailed them. The battle raged as fiercely on the lake as on the land. Many of the Indian vessels were shattered and overturned. Some few, however, under cover of the smoke, which rolled darkly over the waters, succeeded in clearing themselves of the turmoil, and were fast nearing the opposite shore.

Sandoval had particularly charged his captains to keep an eye on the movements of any vessel in which it was at all probable that Guatemozin might be concealed. At this crisis, three or four of the largest *piraguas* were seen skimming over the water and making their way rapidly across the lake. A captain, named Garci Holguin, who had command of one of the best sailers in the fleet, instantly gave them chase. The wind was favourable, and every moment he gained on the fugitives, who pulled their oars with a vigour that despair alone could have given. But it was in vain; and, after a short race, Holguin, coming alongside of one of the *piraguas*, which, whether from its appearance or from information he had received, he conjectured might bear the Indian emperor, ordered his men to level their crossbows at the boat. But, before they could discharge them, a cry arose from those in it that their lord was on board. At the same moment a young warrior, armed with buckler and *maquahuitl*, rose up, as if to beat off the assailants. But, as the Spanish captain ordered his men not to shoot, he dropped his weapons, and exclaimed, "I am Guatemozin. Lead me to Malinche; I am his prisoner; but let no harm come to my wife and my followers.

Holguin assured him that his wishes should be respected, and assisted him to get on board the brigantine, followed by his wife and attendants. These were twenty in number, consisting of Coanaco, the deposed lord of Tezcuco, the lord of Tlacopan, and several other caciques and dignitaries, whose rank, probably, had secured them

some exemption from the general calamities of the siege. When the captives were seated on the deck of his vessel, Holguin requested the Aztec prince to put an end to the combat by commanding his people in the other canoes to surrender. But with a dejected air, he replied, "It is not necessary. They will fight no longer, when they see that their prince is taken." He spoke truth.

Meanwhile, Sandoval, on receiving tidings of the capture, brought his own brigantine alongside of Holguin's and demanded the royal prisoner to be surrendered to him. But the captain claimed him as his prize. A dispute arose between the parties, each anxious to have the glory of the deed, and perhaps the privilege of commemorating it on his escutcheon. The controversy continued so long that it reached the ears of Cortés, who, in his station on the *azotea*, had learned with no little satisfaction the capture of his enemy. He instantly sent orders to his wrangling officers to bring Guatemozin before him, that he might adjust the difference between them.

Guatemozin, on landing, was escorted by a company of infantry to the presence of the Spanish commander. He mounted the *azotea* with a calm and steady step, and was easily to be distinguished from his attendant nobles, though his full, dark eye was no longer lighted up with its accustomed fire, and his features wore an expression of passive resignation, that told little of the fierce and fiery spirit that burned within. His head was large, his limbs well proportioned, his complexion fairer than that of his bronze-coloured nation, and his whole deportment singularly mild and engaging.

Cortés came forward with a dignified and studied courtesy to receive him. The Aztec monarch probably knew the person of his conqueror, for he first broke silence by saying, "I have done all that I could to defend myself and my people. I am now reduced to this state. You will deal with me, Malinche, as you list." Then, laying his hand on the hilt of a poniard stuck in the general's belt, he added, with vehemence, "Better despatch me with this, and rid me of life at once." Cortés was filled with admiration at the proud bearing of the young barbarian, showing in his reverses a spirit worthy of an ancient Roman. "Fear not," he replied: "you shall be treated with all honour. You have defended your capital like a brave warrior. A Spaniard knows how to respect valour even in an enemy." He then inquired of him where he had left the princess his wife; and, being informed that she still remained under protection of a Spanish guard on board the brigantine, the general sent to have her escorted to his presence.

She was the youngest daughter of Montezuma, and was hardly yet on the verge of womanhood. On the accession of her cousin Guatemozin to the throne, she had been wedded to him as his lawful wife. She is celebrated by her contemporaries for her personal charms; and the beautiful princess Tecuichpo is still commemorated by the Spaniards, since from her by a subsequent marriage are descended some of the illustrious families of their own nation. She was kindly received by Cortés, who showed her the respectful attentions suited to her rank. Her birth, no doubt, gave her an additional interest in his eyes, and he may have felt

some touch of compunction as he gazed on the daughter of the unfortunate Montezuma. He invited his royal captives to partake of the refreshments which their exhausted condition rendered so necessary.

During the night, a tremendous tempest, such as the Spaniards had rarely witnessed, and such as is known only within the tropics, burst over the Mexican Valley. The thunder, reverberating from the rocky amphitheatre of hills, bellowed over the waste of waters, and shook the *teocallis* and crazy tenements of Tenochtitlan—the few that yet survived—to their foundations. The lightning seemed to cleave asunder the vault of heaven, as its vivid flashes wrapped the whole scene in a ghastly glare, for a moment, to be again swallowed up in darkness. The war of elements was in unison with the fortunes of the ruined city.

On the day following the surrender, Guatemozin requested the Spanish commander to allow the Mexicans to leave the city and to pass unmolested into the open country. To this Cortés readily assented, as, indeed, without it he could take no steps for purifying the capital. He gave his orders, accordingly, for the evacuation of the place, commanding that no one, Spaniard or confederate, should offer violence to the Aztecs or in any way obstruct their departure. The whole number of these is variously estimated at from thirty to seventy thousand, besides women and children, who had survived the sword, pestilence, and famine. It is certain they were three days in defiling along the several causeways,

—a mournful train; husbands and wives, parents and children, the sick and the wounded, leaning on one another for support, as they feebly tottered along, squalid, and but half covered with rags, that disclosed at every step hideous gashes, some recently received, others festering from long neglect, and carrying with them an atmosphere of contagion. Their wasted forms and famine-stricken faces told the whole history of the siege and, as the straggling files gained the opposite shore, they were observed to pause from time to time, as if to take one more look at the spot so lately crowned by the imperial city, once their pleasant home, and endeared to them by many a glorious recollection.

MEXICAN TEMPLES AND HUMAN SACRIFICES

THE Mexican temples — *teocallis*, “houses of God,” as they were called—were very numerous. There were several hundreds in each of the principal cities, many of them, doubtless, very humble edifices. They were solid masses of earth, cased with brick or stone, and in their form somewhat resembled the pyramidal structures of ancient Egypt. The bases of many of them were more than a hundred feet square, and they towered to a still greater height. They were distributed into four or five stories, each of smaller dimensions than that below. The ascent was by a flight of steps, at an angle of the pyramid, on the outside. This led to a sort of terrace or gallery, at the base of the second story, which passed quite round the building to another

flight of stairs, commencing also at the same angle as the preceding and directly over it, and leading to a similar terrace; so that one had to make the circuit of the temple several times before reaching the summit. In some instances the stairway led directly up the centre of the western face of the building. The top was a broad area, on which were erected one or two towers, forty or fifty feet high, the sanctuaries in which stood the sacred images of the presiding deities. Before these towers stood the dreadful stones of sacrifice, and two lofty altars, on which fires were kept, as inextinguishable as those in the temple of Vesta. There were said to be six hundred of these altars, on smaller buildings within the enclosure of the great temple of Mexico, which, with those on the sacred edifices in other parts of the city, shed a brilliant illumination over its streets, through the darkest night.

From the construction of their temples, all religious services were public. The long processions of priests winding round their massive sides, as they rose higher and higher towards the summit, and the dismal rites of sacrifice performed there, were all visible from the remotest corners of the capital, impressing on the spectator's mind a superstitious veneration for the mysteries of his religion, and for the dread ministers by whom they were interpreted.

Human sacrifices were adopted by the Aztecs early in the fourteenth century, about two hundred years before the Conquest. Rare at first, they became more frequent with the wider extent of their empire; till, at length, almost every festival

was closed with this cruel abomination. These religious ceremonials were generally arranged in such a manner as to afford a type of the most prominent circumstances in the character or history of the deity who was the object of them. A single example will suffice.

One of their most important festivals was that in honour of the god Tezcatlipoca, whose rank was inferior only to that of the Supreme Being. He was called "the soul of the world," and supposed to have been its creator. He was depicted as a handsome man, endowed with perpetual youth. A year before the intended sacrifice, a captive, distinguished for his personal beauty, and without a blemish on his body, was selected to represent this deity. Certain tutors took charge of him, and instructed him how to perform his new part with becoming grace and dignity. He was arrayed in a splendid dress, regaled with incense and with a profusion of sweet-scented flowers, of which the ancient Mexicans were as fond as their descendants at the present day. When he went abroad, he was attended by a train of the royal pages, and as he halted in the streets to play some favourite melody, the crowd prostrated themselves before him, and did him homage as the representative of their good deity. In this way he led an easy, luxurious life, till within a month of his sacrifice. Four beautiful girls bearing the names of the principal goddesses, were then selected as his wives; and with them he continued to live in idle dalliance, feasted at the banquets of the principal nobles, who paid him all the honours of a divinity.

At length the fatal day of sacrifice arrived. The term of his short-lived glories was at an end. He was stripped of his gaudy apparel, and bade adieu to the fair partners of his revelries. One of the royal barges transported him across the lake to a temple which rose on its margin, about a league from the city. Hither the inhabitants of the capital flocked, to witness the consummation of the ceremony. As the sad procession wound up the sides of the pyramid, the unhappy victim threw away his gay chaplets of flowers, and broke in pieces the musical instruments with which he had solaced the hours of captivity. On the summit he was received by six priests, whose long and matted locks flowed disorderly over their sable robes, covered with hieroglyphic scrolls of mystic import. They led him to the sacrificial stone, a huge block of jasper, with its upper surface somewhat convex. On this the prisoner was stretched. Five priests secured his head and his limbs; while the sixth, clad in a scarlet mantle, emblematic of his bloody office, dexterously opened the breast of the wretched victim with a sharp razor of *itztli*,—a volcanic substance, hard as flint,—and, inserting his hand in the wound, tore out the palpitating heart. The minister of death, first holding this up towards the sun, an object of worship throughout Anahuac, cast it at the feet of the diety to whom the temple was devoted, while the multitudes below prostrated themselves in humble adoration. The tragic story of this prisoner was expounded by the priests as the type of human destiny, which, brilliant in its commencement, too often closes in sorrow and disaster.

Such was the form of human sacrifice usually practised by the Aztecs. It was the same that often met the indignant eyes of the Europeans in their progress through the country, and from the dreadful doom of which they themselves were not exempted. There were, indeed, some occasions when preliminary tortures, of the most exquisite kind,—with which it is unnecessary to shock the reader,—were inflicted, but they always terminated with the bloody ceremony above described. It should be remarked, however, that such tortures were not the spontaneous suggestions of cruelty, as with the North American Indians, but were all rigorously prescribed in the Aztec ritual, and doubtless were often inflicted with the same compunctious visitings which a devout familiar of the Holy Office might at times experience in executing its stern decrees. Women, as well as the other sex, were sometimes reserved for sacrifice. On some occasions, particularly in seasons of drought, at the festival of the insatiable Tlaloc, the god of rain, children, for the most part infants, were offered up. As they were borne along in open litters, dressed in their festal robes, and decked with the fresh blossoms of spring, they moved the hardest heart to pity, though their cries were drowned in the wild chant of the priests, who read in their tears a favourable augury for their petition. These innocent victims were generally bought by the priest of parents who were poor, but who stifled the voice of nature, probably less at the suggestions of poverty than of a wretched superstition.

The most loathsome part of the story—the

manner in which the body of the sacrificed captive was disposed of—remains yet to be told. It was delivered to the warrior who had taken him in battle, and by him, after being dressed, was served up in an entertainment to his friends. This was not the coarse repast of famished cannibals, but a banquet teeming with delicious beverages, and delicate viands, prepared with art, and attended by both sexes, who, as we shall see hereafter, conducted themselves with all the decorum of civilised life. Surely, never were refinement and the extreme of barbarism brought so closely in contact with each other.

Human sacrifices have been practised by many nations, not excepting the most polished nations of antiquity; but never by any, on a scale to be compared with those in Anahuac. The amount of victims immolated on its accursed altars would stagger the faith of the least scrupulous believer. Scarcely any author pretends to estimate the yearly sacrifices throughout the empire at less than twenty thousand, and some carry the number as high as fifty thousand!

On great occasions, as the coronation of a king or the consecration of a temple, the number becomes still more appalling. At the dedication of the great temple of Huitzilopochtli, in 1486, the prisoners, who for some years had been reserved for the purpose, were drawn from all quarters to the capital. They were ranged in files forming a procession nearly two miles long, and 70,000 captives are said to have perished.

PERU

RUMOURS OF THE MYSTERIOUS LAND

It is not easy at this time to comprehend the impulse given to Europe by the discovery of America. It was not the gradual acquisition of some border territory, a province or a kingdom that had been gained, but a new world that was now thrown open to the European. The races of animals, the mineral treasures, the vegetable forms, and the varied aspects of nature, man in the different phases of civilisation, filled the mind with entirely new sets of ideas, that changed the habitual current of thought and stimulated it to indefinite conjecture. The eagerness to explore the wonderful secrets of the new hemisphere became so active that the principal cities of Spain were, in a manner, depopulated, as emigrants thronged one after another to take their chance upon the deep. It was a world of romance that was thrown open; for, whatever might be the luck of the adventurer, his reports on his return were tinged with a colouring of romance that stimulated still higher the sensitive fancies of his countrymen and nourished the chimerical sentiments of an age of chivalry. They listened with attentive ears to tales of Amazons which seemed

to realise the classic legends of antiquity, to stories of Patagonian giants, to flaming pictures of an *El Dorado* where the sands sparkled with gems, and golden pebbles as large as birds' eggs were dragged in nets out of the rivers.

Yet that the adventurers were no impostors, but dupes, too easy dupes, of their own credulous fancies, is shown by the extravagant character of their enterprises; by expeditions in search of the magical Fountain of Health, of the golden Temple of Doboyba, of the golden sepulchres of Zenu; for gold was ever floating before their distempered vision, and the name of *Castilla del Oro*, Golden Castile, the most unhealthy and unprofitable region of the Isthmus, held out a bright promise to the unfortunate settler, who too frequently, instead of gold, found there only his grave.

Floating rumours had reached the Spaniards, from time to time, of countries in the far west, teeming with the metal they so much coveted; but the first distinct notice of Peru was about the year 1511, when Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, the discoverer of the Southern Sea, was weighing some gold which he had collected from the natives. A young barbarian chieftain, who was present, struck the scales with his fist, and, scattering the glittering metal around the apartment, exclaimed, "If this is what you prize so much that you are willing to leave your distant homes and risk even life itself for it, I can tell you of a land where they eat and drink out of golden vessels, and gold is as cheap as iron is with you." It was not long after this startling intelligence that Balboa achieved the formidable adventure of scaling the mountain-

rampart of the isthmus which divides the two mighty oceans from each other; when, armed with sword and buckler, he rushed into the waters of the Pacific, and cried out, in the true chivalrous vein, that "he claimed this unknown sea, with all that it contained, for the King of Castile, and that he would make good the claim against all, Christian or infidel, who dared to gainsay it!" All the broad continent and sunny isles washed by the waters of the Southern Ocean! Little did the bold cavalier comprehend the full import of his magnificent vaunt.

On this spot he received more explicit tidings of the Peruvian empire, heard proofs recounted of its civilisation, and was shown drawings of the llama, which, to the European eye, seemed a species of the Arabian camel. But, although he steered his caravel for these golden realms, and even pushed his discoveries some twenty leagues south of the Gulf of St Michael, the adventure was not reserved for him. The illustrious discoverer was doomed to fall a victim to that miserable jealousy with which a little spirit regards the achievements of a great one.

Among the colonial governors who were indebted for their situation to their rank at home was Don Pedro Arias de Avila, or Pedrarias, as usually called. He was married to a daughter of Doña Beatriz de Bobadilla, the celebrated Marchioness of Moya, best known as the friend of Isabella the Catholic. He was a man of some military experience and considerable energy of character, but, as it proved, of a malignant temper; and the base qualities which might have

passed unnoticed in the obscurity of private life were made conspicuous, and perhaps created in some measure, by sudden elevation to power.

But Pedrarias was not insensible to the important consequences of Balboa's discoveries. He saw at once the unsuitableness of Darien for prosecuting expeditions on the Pacific, and, conformably to the original suggestion of Balboa, in 1519 he caused his rising capital to be transferred from the shores of the Atlantic to the ancient site of Panamá, some distance east of the present city of that name. Armament after armament was fitted out, and Pedrarias saw his domain extending every year farther and farther without deriving any considerable advantage from his acquisitions. Veragua, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, were successively occupied; and his brave cavaliers forced a way across forest and mountain and warlike tribes of savages, till, at Honduras, they came in collision with the companions of Cortés, the Conquerors of Mexico, who had descended from the great northern plateau on the regions of Central America, and thus completed the survey of this wild and mysterious land.

Yet the floating rumours of the wealth and civilisation of a mighty nation at the south were continually reaching the ears and kindling the dreamy imaginations of the colonists; and it may seem astonishing that an expedition in that direction should have been so long deferred. But the exact position and distance of this fairy realm were matter of conjecture. The long tract of intervening country was occupied by rude and war-like races; and the little experience which

the Spanish navigators had already had of the neighbouring coast and its inhabitants, and still more, the tempestuous character of the seas,—for their expeditions had taken place at the most unpropitious seasons of the year,—enhanced the apparent difficulties of the undertaking and made even their stout hearts shrink from it.

Such was the state of feeling in the little community of Panamá for several years after its foundation. Meanwhile, the dazzling conquest of Mexico gave a new impulse to the ardour of discovery, and in 1524 three men were found in the colony in whom the spirit of adventure triumphed over every consideration of difficulty and danger that obstructed the prosecution of the enterprise. One among them was selected as fitted by his character to conduct it to a successful issue. That man was Francisco Pizarro; and as he held the same conspicuous post in the Conquest of Peru that was occupied by Cortés in that of Mexico, it will be necessary to take a brief review of his early history.

THE DISCOVERY OF PERU

FRANCISCO PIZARRO was born at Truxillo, a city of Estremadura, in Spain. The period of his birth is uncertain; but probably it was not far from 1471. He was an illegitimate child, and that his parents should not have taken pains to perpetuate the date of his birth is not surprising. Few care to make a particular record of their transgressions. His father, Gonzalo Pizarro, was a colonel of infantry and served with some distinction in the

Italian campaigns under the Great Captain, and afterwards in the wars of Navarre. His mother, named Francisca Gonzales, was a person of humble condition in the town of Truxillo.

The young Pizarro received little care from either of his parents and was suffered to grow up as nature dictated. He was neither taught to read nor write and his principal occupation was that of a swineherd. This torpid way of life did not suit the stirring spirit of Pizarro, as he grew older and listened to the tales, widely circulated and so captivating to a youthful fancy, of the New World. He shared in the popular enthusiasm, and availed himself of a favourable moment to abandon his ignoble charge and escape to Seville, the port where Spanish adventurers embarked to seek their fortunes in the West. Few of them could have turned their backs on their native land with less cause for regret than Pizarro.

In what year this important change in his destiny took place we are not informed. The first we hear of him in the New World is at the island of Hispaniola, in 1510, where he took part in the expedition to Uraba in Terra Firma, under Alonzo de Ojeda, a cavalier whose character and achievements find no parallel but in the pages of Cervantes. Hernando Cortés, whose mother was a Pizarro, and related, it is said, to the father of Francis, was then in St Domingo, and prepared to accompany Ojeda's small vessel that remained to it.

After this, we find him associated with Balboa, the discoverer of the Pacific, and co-operating with him in establishing the settlement at Darien. He had the glory of accompanying this gallant

cavalier in his terrible march across the mountains, and of being among the first Europeans, therefore, whose eyes were greeted with the long-promised vision of the Southern Ocean.

After the untimely death of his commander, Pizarro attached himself to the fortunes of Pedrarias, and was employed by that governor in several military expeditions, which, if they afforded nothing else, gave him the requisite training for the perils and privations that lay in the path of the future Conqueror of Peru.

In 1515 he was selected, with another cavalier, named Morales, to cross the Isthmus and traffic with the natives on the shores of the Pacific. And there, while engaged in collecting his booty of gold and pearls from the neighbouring islands, as his eye ranged along the shadowy line of coast till it faded in the distance, his imagination may have been first fired with the idea of, one day, attempting the conquest of the mysterious regions beyond the mountains. On the removal of the seat of government across the Isthmus to Panamá, Pizarro accompanied Pedrarias, and his name became conspicuous among the cavaliers who extended the line of conquest to the north over the martial tribes of Veragua. But all these, whatever glory they brought him, were productive of very little gold, and at the age of fifty, the Captain Pizarro found himself in possession only of a tract of unhealthy land in the neighbourhood of the capital and of such *repartimientos* of the natives as were deemed suited to his military services. The New World was a lottery where the great prizes were so few that the odds were much against

the player ; yet in the game he was content to stake health, fortune, and too often his fair fame.

PIZARRO STARTS ON HIS ENTERPRISE

SUCH was Pizarro's situation when, in 1522, Andagoya returned from his unfinished enterprise to the south of Panamá, bringing back with him more copious accounts than any hitherto received of the opulence and grandeur of the countries that lay beyond. It was at this time, too, that the splendid achievements of Cortés made their impression on the public mind and gave a new impulse to the spirit of adventure. The southern expeditions became a common topic of speculation among the colonists of Panamá. But the region of gold, as it lay behind the mighty curtain of the Cordilleras, was still veiled in obscurity. No idea could be formed of its actual distance ; and the hardships and difficulties encountered by the few navigators who had sailed in that direction gave a gloomy character to the undertaking, which had hitherto deterred the most daring from embarking in it. There is no evidence that Pizarro showed any particular alacrity in the cause. Nor were his own funds such as to warrant any expectation of success without great assistance from others. He found this in two individuals of the colony, who took too important a part in the subsequent transactions not to be particularly noticed.

One of them, Diego de Almagro, was a soldier of fortune, somewhat older, it seems probable, than Pizarro ; though little is known of his birth, and even the place of it is disputed. It is

supposed to have been the town of Almagro in New Castile, whence his own name, for want of a better source, was derived : for, like Pizarro, he was a foundling. In his military career, Almagro had earned the reputation of a gallant soldier. He was frank and liberal in his disposition, somewhat hasty and ungovernable in his passions, but, like men of a sanguine temperament, after the first sallies had passed away, not difficult to be appeased. He had, in short, the good qualities and the defects incident to an honest nature not improved by the discipline of early education or self-control.

The other member of the confederacy was Hernando de Luque, a Spanish ecclesiastic, who exercised the functions of vicar at Panamá, and had formerly filled the office of schoolmaster in the Cathedral of Darien.

It was arranged among the three associates that the two cavaliers should contribute their little stock towards defraying the expenses of the armament, but by far the greater part of the funds was to be furnished by Luque. Pizarro was to take command of the expedition, and the business of victualling and equipping the vessels was assigned to Almagro. The associates found no difficulty in obtaining the consent of the governor to their undertaking.

Thus fortified with the funds of Luque and the consent of the governor. Almagro was not slow to make preparations for the voyage. Two small vessels were purchased, the larger of which had been originally built by Balboa for himself, with a view to this same expedition. Since his death, it had lain dismantled in the harbour of Panamá.

It was now refitted as well as circumstances would permit, and put in order for sea, while the stores and provisions were got on board with an alacrity which did more credit, as the event proved, to Almagro's zeal than to his forecast.

There was more difficulty in obtaining the necessary complement of hands; for a general feeling of distrust had gathered round expeditions in this direction, which could not readily be overcome. But there were many idle hangers-on in the colony, who had come out to mend their fortunes, and were willing to take their chance of doing so, however desperate. From such materials as these, Almagro assembled a body of somewhat more than a hundred men; and, everything being ready, Pizarro assumed command, and, weighing anchor, took his departure from the little port of Panamá, about the middle of November 1524. Almagro was to follow in a second vessel of inferior size, as soon as it could be fitted out.

The time of year was the most unsuitable that could have been selected for the voyage; for it was the rainy season, when the navigation to the south, impeded by contrary winds, is made doubly dangerous by the tempests that sweep over the coast. But this was not understood by the adventurers. After touching at the Isle of Pearls, the frequent resort of navigators, at a few leagues' distance from Panamá, Pizarro held his way across the Gulf of St Michael, and steered almost due south for the Puerto de Piñas, a headland in the province of Biruquete, which marked the limit of Andagoya's voyage. He touched at several places, but none was suitable for his purpose.

SUFFERINGS OF PIZARRO AND HIS
COMPANIONS

FIRST MEETING WITH THE INDIANS

EARLY discouraged by the aspect of the country, the Spaniards began to comprehend that they had gained nothing by changing their quarters from sea to shore, and they felt the most serious apprehensions of perishing from famine in a region which afforded nothing but such unwholesome berries as they could pick here and there in the woods. They loudly complained of their hard lot, accusing their commander as the author of all their troubles.

But Pizarro was prepared to encounter much greater evils than these before returning to Panamá, bankrupt in credit, an object of derision as a vainglorious dreamer who had persuaded others to embark in an adventure which he had not the courage to carry through himself. The present was his only chance. To return would be ruin. He used every argument, therefore, that mortified pride or avarice could suggest to turn his followers from their purpose; yet, as their present exigencies were pressing, he resolved to send back the vessel under an officer named Montenegro to the Isle of Pearls, to lay in a fresh stock of provisions for his company, which might enable them to go forward with renewed confidence.

On the departure of his vessel, the Spanish commander made an attempt to explore the country and see if some Indian settlement might

not be found, where he could procure refreshments for his followers. But his efforts were vain, and no trace was visible of a human dwelling; though in the dense and impenetrable foliage of the equatorial regions the distance of a few rods might suffice to screen a city from observation. The only means of nourishment left to the unfortunate adventurers were such shell-fish as they occasionally picked up on the shore, or the bitter buds of the palm-tree, and such berries and unsavoury herbs as grew wild in the woods. Some of these were so poisonous that the bodies of those who ate them swelled up and were tormented with racking pains. Others, preferring famine to this miserable diet, pined away from weakness and actually died of starvation. Yet their resolute leader strove to maintain his own cheerfulness and to keep up the drooping spirits of his men. He freely shared with them his scanty stock of provisions, was unwearied in his endeavours to procure them sustenance, tended the sick, and ordered barracks to be constructed for their accommodation, which might at least shelter them from the drenching storms of the season. By this ready sympathy with his followers in their sufferings he obtained an ascendancy over their rough natures which the assertion of authority, at least in the present extremity, could never have secured to him.

Day after day, week after week, had now passed away, and no tidings were heard of the vessel that was to bring relief to the wanderers. More than twenty of the little band had already died, and the survivors seemed to be rapidly following.

At this crisis reports were brought to Pizarro of a light having been seen through a distant opening in the woods. He hailed the tidings with eagerness, as intimating the existence of some settlement in the neighbourhood, and, putting himself at the head of a small party, went in the direction pointed out, to reconnoitre. He was not disappointed, and, after extricating himself from a dense wilderness of underbrush and foliage, he emerged into an open space, where a small Indian village was planted. The timid inhabitants, on the sudden apparition of the strangers, quitted their huts in dismay; and the famished Spaniards, rushing in, eagerly made themselves masters of their contents. These consisted of different articles of food, chiefly maize and cocoa nuts. The supply, though small, was too seasonable not to fill them with rapture.

But the savages wore about their persons gold ornaments of some size, though of clumsy workmanship. This furnished the best reply to their demand. It was the golden bait which lured the Spanish adventurer to forsake his pleasant home for the trials of the wilderness. From the Indians Pizarro gathered a confirmation of the reports he had so often received of a rich country lying farther south; and at the distance of ten days' journey across the mountains, they told him, there dwelt a mighty monarch whose dominions had been invaded by another still more powerful, the child of the Sun. It may have been the invasion of Quito that was meant, by the valiant Inca Huayna Capac, which took place some years previous to Pizarro's expedition.

At length, after the expiration of more than six weeks, the Spaniards beheld with delight the return of the wandering bark that had borne away their comrades, and Montenegro sailed into port with an ample supply of provisions for his famishing countrymen.

Revived by the substantial nourishment to which they had so long been strangers, the Spanish cavaliers, with the buoyancy that belongs to men of a hazardous and roving life, forgot their past distresses in their eagerness to prosecute their enterprise. Re-embarking, therefore, on board his vessel, Pizarro bade adieu to the scene of so much suffering, which he branded with the appropriate name of *Puerto de la Hambre*, the Port of Famine, and again opened his sails to a favourable breeze that bore him onwards towards the south. The weather which had been favourable now set in tempestuous, with heavy squalls, accompanied by incessant thunder and lightning, and the rain as usual in these tropical tempests descended not so much in drops as in unbroken sheets of water. The Spaniards, however, preferred to take their chance on the raging element rather than remain in the scene of such brutal abominations. But the fury of the storm gradually subsided, and the little vessel held on her way along the coast, till, coming abreast of a bold point of land named by Pizarro Punta Quemada, he gave orders to anchor. The margin of the shore was fringed with a deep belt of mangrove-trees, the long roots of which, interlacing one another, formed a kind of submarine lattice-work that made the place difficult of

approach. Several avenues, opening through this tangled thicket, led Pizarro to conclude that the country must be inhabited, and he disembarked, with the greater part of his force, to explore the interior.

He had not penetrated more than a league when he found his conjecture verified by the sight of an Indian town, of larger size than those he had hitherto seen, occupying the brow of an eminence, and well defended by palisades. The inhabitants, as usual, had fled, but left in their dwellings a good supply of provisions and some gold trinkets, which the Spaniards made no difficulty of appropriating to themselves. Pizarro's flimsy bark had been strained by the heavy gales it had of late encountered, so that it was unsafe to prosecute the voyage farther without more thorough repairs than could be given to her on this desolate coast. He accordingly determined to send her back with a few hands to be careened at Panamá, and meanwhile to establish his quarters in his present position, which was so favourable for defence. But first he despatched a small party under Montenegro to reconnoitre the country, and, if possible, to open a communication with the natives.

The latter were a warlike race. They had left their habitations in order to place their wives and children in safety. But they had kept an eye on the movements of the invaders, and when they saw their forces divided they resolved to fall upon each body singly before it could communicate with the other. So soon, therefore, as Montenegro had penetrated through the defiles of the lofty

hills which shoot out like spurs of the Cordilleras along this part of the coast, the Indian warriors, springing from their ambush, sent off a cloud of arrows and other missiles that darkened the air, while they made the forest ring with their shrill war-whoop. The Spaniards, astonished at the appearance of the savages, with their naked bodies gaudily painted, and brandishing their weapons as they glanced among the trees and straggling underbrush that choked up the defile, were taken by surprise and thrown for a moment into disarray. Three of their number were killed and several wounded. Yet, speedily rallying, they returned the discharge of the assailants with their cross-bows,—for Pizarro's troops do not seem to have been provided with muskets on this expedition,—and then, gallantly charging the enemy, sword in hand, succeeded in driving them back into the fastnesses of the mountains. But the victory was dear bought, for four Spaniards were killed and several severely wounded. A council of war was called. On the whole it was decided to return and report these proceedings to the governor. Though the magnificent hopes of the adventurers had not been realised Pizarro trusted enough had been done to vindicate the importance of the enterprise.

Yet Pizarro could not make up his mind to present himself to the governor. From this place, which he reached without any further accident, he despatched the vessel, and in it his treasurer, Nicolas de Ribera, with the gold he had collected, and with instructions to lay before the governor a full account of his discoveries and the result of the expedition.

PIZARRO AT THE RIO DE SAN JUAN

ON the departure of his vessel, Pizarro marched into the interior, in the hope of finding the pleasant champaign country which had been promised him by the natives. But at every step the forests seemed to grow denser and darker, and the trees towered to a height such as he had never seen, even in these fruitful regions, where Nature works on so gigantic a scale. Hill continued to rise above hill, as he advanced, rolling onward, as it were, by successive waves to join that colossal barrier of the Andes, whose frosty sides, far away above the clouds, spread out like a curtain of burnished silver, that seemed to connect the heavens with the earth.

On crossing these woody eminences, the forlorn adventurers would plunge into ravines of frightful depth, where the exhalations of a humid soil steamed up amidst the incense of sweet-scented flowers, which shone through the deep gloom in every conceivable variety of colour. Birds, especially of the parrot tribe, mocked this fantastic variety of nature with tints as brilliant as those of the vegetable world. Monkeys chattered in crowds above their heads, and made grimaces like the fiendish spirits of these solitudes; while hideous reptiles, engendered in the slimy depths of the pools, gathered round the footsteps of the wanderers. Here was seen the gigantic boa, coiling his unwieldy folds about the trees, so as hardly to be distinguished from their trunks, till he was ready to dart upon his prey; and alligators

lay basking on the borders of the streams, or, gliding under the waters, seized their incautious victim before he was aware of their approach. Many of the Spaniards perished miserably in this way, and others were waylaid by the natives, who kept a jealous eye on their movements and availed themselves of every opportunity to take them at advantage. Fourteen of Pizarro's men were cut off at once in a canoe which had stranded on the bank of a stream.

Famine came in addition to other troubles, and it was with difficulty that they found the means of sustaining life on the scanty fare of the forest,—occasionally the potato, as it grew without cultivation, or the wild cocoanut, or on the shore the salt and bitter fruit of the mangrove. In this extremity of suffering they thought only of return to Panamá.

It was at this crisis that the pilot Ruiz returned with the report of his brilliant discoveries; and, not long after, Almagro sailed into port with his vessel laden with provisions and a considerable reinforcement of volunteers. Fortunately, just before this period a small body of military adventurers had come to Panamá from the mother-country, burning with desire to make their fortunes in the New World. They caught much more eagerly than the old and wary colonists at the golden bait held out to them; and with their addition, and that of a few supernumerary stragglers who hung about the town, Almagro found himself at the head of a reinforcement of at least eighty men, with which, having laid in a fresh supply of stores, he again set sail for the Rio de San Juan.

The arrival of the new recruits all eager to follow up the expedition, the comfortable change in their circumstances produced by an ample supply of provisions, and the glowing pictures of the wealth that awaited them in the south, all had their effect on the dejected spirits of Pizarro's followers. Their late toils and privations were speedily forgotten, and, with the buoyant and variable feelings incident to a freebooter's life, they now called as eagerly on their commander to go forward in the voyage as they had before called on him to abandon it. Availing themselves of the renewed spirit of enterprise, the captains embarked on board their vessels, and, under the guidance of the veteran pilot, steered in the same track he had lately pursued.

THE VOYAGE RESUMED

AMONG A HIGHLY CIVILISED PEOPLE

BUT the favourable season for a southern course, which in these latitudes lasts but a few months in the year, had been suffered to escape. The breezes blew steadily towards the north, and a strong current, not far from shore, set in the same direction. The winds frequently rose into tempests, and the unfortunate voyagers were tossed about, for many days, in the boiling surges, amidst the most awful storms of thunder and lightning, until at length they found a secure haven in the island of Gallo. After remaining a fortnight they pushed on to the bay of St Matthew, and as they advanced along the coast they were struck by the evidences of a higher civilisation constantly

exhibited in the country. The villages became more numerous, and as the vessels rode at anchor off the port of Tacamez, the Spaniards saw before them a town of 2000 houses laid out in streets. The men and women displayed many ornaments of gold and precious stones about their persons.

The Spaniards gazed with delight on ~~these~~ undeniable evidences of wealth, and saw in the careful cultivation of the soil a comfortable assurance that they had at length reached the land which had so long been seen in brilliant, though distant, perspective before them. But here again they were doomed to be disappointed by the warlike spirit of the people, who, conscious of their own strength, showed no disposition to quail before the invaders. On the contrary, several of their canoes shot out, loaded with warriors, who, displaying a gold mask as their ensign, hovered round the vessels with looks of defiance, and, when pursued, easily took shelter under the lee of the land.

A more formidable body mustered along the shore, to the number, according to the Spanish accounts, of at least ten thousand warriors, eager, apparently, to come to close action with the invaders. Nor could Pizarro, who had landed with a party of his men in the hope of a conference with the natives, wholly prevent hostilities; and it might have gone hard with the Spaniards, hotly pressed by their resolute enemy, but for a ludicrous accident. This was a fall from his horse which happened to one of the Cavaliers, and so astonished the barbarians that they fell back.

A council of war was now called. It was evident that the forces of the Spaniards were un-

equal to a contest with so numerous and well-appointed a body of natives; and even if they should prevail here, they could have no hope of stemming the torrent which must rise against them in their progress,—for the country was becoming more and more thickly settled, and towns and hamlets started into view at every new headland which they doubled. It was better, in the opinion of some, — the faint-hearted, — to abandon the enterprise at once, as beyond their strength. But Almagro took a different view of the affair. “To go home,” he said, “with nothing done, would be ruin, as well as disgrace.” The only course was that Pizarro might find some more commodious place where he could remain with part of the force while Almagro went back for recruits to Panamá. After some dispute, Almagro’s plan was adopted and it only remained to find out the most secure and convenient spot for the quarters. Several days were passed in touching at different parts of the coast, but everywhere the natives were menacing. In this perplexity they decided on the little island of Gallo, as being, on the whole, from its distance from the shore, and from the scantiness of its population, the most eligible spot for them in their forlorn and destitute condition.

PIZARRO AND HIS MEN

INDIGNATION AT PANAMÁ

BUT no sooner was the resolution of the two captains made known than a feeling of discontent broke forth among their followers, especially those

who were to remain with Pizarro on the island. "What!" they exclaimed, "were they to be dragged to that obscure spot to die by hunger? The whole expedition had been a cheat and a failure, from beginning to end. The golden countries, so much vaunted, had seemed to fly before them as they advanced; and the little gold they had been fortunate enough to glean had all been sent back to Panama to entice other fools to follow their example.

In this exasperated state of feeling, several of the soldiers wrote back to their friends, informing them of their deplorable condition, and complaining of the cold-blooded manner in which they were to be sacrificed to the obstinate cupidity of their leaders. But the latter were wary enough to anticipate this movement, and Almagro defeated it by seizing all the letters in the vessels, and thus cutting off at once the means of communication with their friends at home. Yet this act of unscrupulous violence, like most other similar acts, fell short of its purpose; for a soldier named Sarabia had the ingenuity to evade it by introducing a letter into a ball of cotton, which was to be taken to Panamá as a specimen of the products of the country and presented to the governor's lady. The letter, which was signed by several of the disaffected soldiery in addition to the writer, painted in gloomy colours the miseries of their condition, accused the two commanders of being the authors of this and called on the authorities at Panamá to send a vessel to take them from the desolate spot, for the few ill-fated survivors of the expedition were detained against

their will by Pizarro, to end their days with their disappointed leader on his island.

Pedro de los Rios, the governor, was so much incensed at the result of the expedition, and the waste of life it had occasioned to the colony, that he turned a deaf ear to all the applications of Luque and Almagro for further countenance in the affair; he derided their sanguine anticipations of the future, and finally resolved to send an officer to the isle of Gallo, with orders to bring back every Spaniard whom he should find still living in that dreary abode. Two vessels were immediately despatched for the purpose, and placed under charge of a cavalier named Tafur, a native of Cordova.

Meanwhile, Pizarro and his followers were experiencing all the miseries which might have been expected from the character of the barren spot on which they were imprisoned. They were, indeed, relieved from all apprehensions of the natives, since these had quitted the island on its occupation by the white men; but they had to endure the pains of hunger even in a greater degree than they had formerly experienced in the wild woods of the neighbouring continent. Their principal food was crabs and such shell-fish as they could scantily pick up along the shores. Incessant storms of thunder and lightning, for it was the rainy season, swept over the devoted island, and drenched them with a perpetual flood. The appearance, therefore, of Tafur with two vessels well stocked with provisions was greeted with all the rapture that the crew of a sinking wreck might feel on the arrival of some unexpected

succour. But by the same vessel letters came to Pizarro from his two confederates Luque and Almagro, beseeching him not to despair in his present extremity, but to hold fast to his original purpose. To return under the present circumstances would be to seal the fate of the expedition, and they solemnly engaged if he would remain firm at his post to furnish him in a short time with the means of going forward. A ray of hope was enough for the courageous spirit of Pizarro. He announced his own purpose, however, in a laconic but decided manner, characteristic of a man more accustomed to act than to talk, and well calculated to make an impression on his rough followers.

Drawing his sword, he traced a line with it on the sand from east to west. Then, turning towards the south, "Friends and comrades!" he said, "on that side are toil, hunger, nakedness, the drenching storm, desertion, and death; on this side, ease and pleasure. There lies Peru with its riches; here, Panamá and its poverty. Choose, each man, what best becomes a brave Castilian. For my part, I go to the south." So saying, he stepped across the line. He was followed by the brave pilot Ruiz; next by Pedro de Candia, a cavalier, born, as his name imports, in one of the isles at Greece. Eleven others successively crossed the line, thus intimating their willingness to abide the fortunes of their leader, for good or for evil.

But the act excited no such admiration in the mind of Tafur, who looked on it as one of gross disobedience to the commands of the governor, and as little better than madness, involving the

certain destruction of the parties engaged in it. He refused to give any sanction to it himself by leaving one of his vessels with the adventurers to prosecute their voyage, and it was with great difficulty that he could be persuaded even to allow them a part of the stores which he had brought for their support. This had no influence on their determination, and the little party, bidding adieu to their returning comrades, remained unshaken in their purpose of abiding the fortunes of their commander.

Pizarro, after Tafur had left, recommended his comrades to construct a large raft, on which they succeeded in transporting themselves to the little island of Gorgona, twenty-five miles to the north. It had some advantages over the isle of Gallo. It stood higher above the sea and was partially covered with wood, and afforded shelter to a species of pheasant and the hare and rabbit of the country, so that the Spaniards with their crossbows were able to obtain a tolerable supply of game.

THE TIDE TURNS

PIZARRO'S HOPES ARE REALISED

MEANWHILE the vessel of Tafur had reached the port of Panamá. The tidings which she brought of the inflexible obstinacy of Pizarro and his followers filled the governor, Pedro de Rios, with indignation. He could look on it in no other light than as an act of suicide, and steadily refused to send further assistance to men who were obstinately bent on their own destruction. Yet Luque and Almagro were true to their

engagements. They represented to the governor that, if the conduct of their comrade was rash, it was at least in the service of the crown and in prosecuting the great work of discovery. Rios had been instructed, on his taking the government, to aid Pizarro in the enterprise; and to desert him now would be to throw away the remaining chance of success, and to incur the responsibility of his death and that of the brave men who adhered to him. These remonstrances, at length, so far operated on the mind of that functionary that he reluctantly consented that a vessel should be sent to the island of Gorgona, but with no more hands than were necessary to work her, and with positive instructions to Pizarro to return in six months and report himself at Panamá, whatever might be the future results of his expedition.

Having thus secured the sanction of the executive, the two associates lost no time in fitting out a small vessel with stores and a supply of arms and ammunition, and despatched it to the island. The unfortunate tenants of this little wilderness, who had now occupied it for seven months, hardly dared to trust their senses when they decried the white sails of the friendly bark coming over the waters. And although, when the vessel anchored off the shore, Pizarro was disappointed to find that it brought no additional recruits for the enterprise, yet he greeted it with joy, as affording the means of solving the great problem of the existence of the rich southern empire, and of thus opening the way for its future conquest.

Every heart was now elevated with hope as they found themselves once more on the

waters, under the guidance of the good pilot Ruiz, who, obeying the directions of the Indians, proposed to steer for the land of Tumbez, which would bring them at once into the golden empire of the Incas,—the El Dorado of which they had been so long in pursuit.

At length, after the lapse of twenty days from their departure from the island, the adventurous vessel rounded the point of St Helena and glided smoothly into the waters of the beautiful gulf of Guayaquil. The country was here studded along the shore with towns and villages, though the mighty chain of the Cordilleras, sweeping up abruptly from the coast, left but a narrow strip of emerald verdure, through which numerous rivulets, spreading fertility around them, wound their way to the sea.

The voyagers were now abreast of some of the most stupendous heights of this magnificent range; Chimborazo, with its broad round summit, towering like the dome of the Andes, and Cotopaxi, with its dazzling cone of silvery white, that knows no change except from the action of its own volcanic fires; for this mountain is the most terrible of the American volcanoes, and was in formidable activity at no great distance from the period of our narrative. Well pleased with the signs of civilization that opened on them at every league of their progress, the Spaniards at length came to anchor, off the island of Santa Clara, lying at the entrance of the bay of Tumbez.

The place was uninhabited, but was recognized by the Indians on board as occasionally resorted to by the warlike people of the neighbouring island

of Puná for purposes of sacrifice and worship. The Spaniards found on the spot a few bits of gold rudely wrought into various shapes, and probably designed as offerings to the Indian deity. Their hearts were cheered, as the natives assured them they would see abundance of the same precious metal in their own city of Tumbes.

The following morning they stood across the bay for this place. As they drew near, they beheld a town of considerable size, with many of the buildings apparently of stone and plaster, situated in the bosom of a fruitful meadow, which seemed to have been redeemed from the sterility of the surrounding country by careful and minute irrigation. When at some distance from shore, Pizarro saw standing towards him several large balsas, which were found to be filled with warriors going on an expedition against the island of Puna. Running alongside of the Indian flotilla, he invited some of the chiefs to come on board of his vessel. The Peruvians gazed with wonder on every object which met their eyes, and especially on their own countrymen, whom they had little expected to meet there. The latter informed them in what manner they had fallen into the hands of the strangers, whom they described as a wonderful race of beings, that had come thither for no harm, but solely to be made acquainted with the country and its inhabitants. This account was confirmed by the Spanish commander, who persuaded the Indians to return in their balsas and report what they had learned to their townsmen, requesting them at the same time to provide his vessel with

refreshments, as it was his desire to enter into friendly intercourse with the natives.

The people of Tumbez were gathered along the shore, and were gazing with unutterable amazement on the floating castle, which, now having dropped anchor, rode lazily at its moorings in their bay. They eagerly listened to the accounts of their countrymen, and instantly reported the affair to the *curaca* or ruler of the district, who, conceiving that the strangers must be beings of a superior order, prepared at once to comply with their request. It was not long before several balsas were seen steering for the vessel, laden with bananas, plantains, yuca, Indian corn, sweet potatoes, pine-apples, cocoanuts, and other rich products of the bountiful vale of Tumbez. Game and fish, also, were added, with a number of llamas, of which Pizarro had seen the rude drawings belonging to Balboa, but of which till now he had met with no living specimen. He examined this curious animal, the Peruvian sheep,—or, as the Spaniards called it, the “little camel” of the Indians,—with much interest, greatly admiring the mixture of wool and hair which supplied the natives with the materials for their fabrics.

At that time there happened to be at Tumbez an Inca noble, or *orejón*,—for so, men of his rank were called by the Spaniards, from the huge ornaments of gold attached to their ears. He expressed great curiosity to see the wonderful strangers, and had, accordingly, come out with the balsas for the purpose. It was easy to perceive, from the superior quality of his dress, as well as from the

deference paid to him by the others, that he was a person of consideration ; and Pizarro received him with marked distinction. He showed him the different parts of the ship, explaining to him the uses of whatever engaged his attention, and answering his numerous queries, as well as he could, by means of the Indian interpreters. The Peruvian chief was especially desirous of knowing whence and why Pizarro and his followers had come to these shores. The Spanish captain replied that he was the vassal of a great prince, the greatest and most powerful in the world, and that he had come to this country to assert his master's *lawful supremacy* over it. He had further come to rescue the inhabitants from the darkness of unbelief in which they were now wandering. They worshipped an evil spirit, who would sink their souls into everlasting perdition ; and he would give them the knowledge of the true and only God, Jesus Christ, since to believe in Him was eternal salvation.

The Indian prince listened with deep attention and apparent wonder, but answered nothing. He remained on board the vessel till the hour of dinner, of which he partook with the Spaniards, expressing his satisfaction at the strange dishes, and especially pleased with the wine, which he pronounced far superior to the fermented liquors of his own country. On taking leave, he courteously pressed the Spaniards to visit Tumbez, and Pizarro dismissed him with the present, among other things, of an iron hatchet, which had greatly excited his admiration ; for the use of iron, as we have seen, was as little known to the Peruvians as to the Mexicans.

THE INDIANS AND THE SPANIARDS

EXCITEMENT ON SHORE

ON the day following, the Spanish captain sent one of his own men, named Alonso de Molina, on shore, accompanied by a negro who had come in the vessel from Panamá, together with a present for the curaca of some swine and poultry, neither of which were indigenous to the New World. Towards evening his emissary returned with a fresh supply of fruit and vegetables, that the friendly people sent to the vessel. Molina had a wondrous tale to tell. On landing, he was surrounded by the natives, who expressed the greatest astonishment at his dress, his fair complexion, and his long beard. The women, especially, manifested great curiosity in respect to him, and Molina seemed to be entirely won by their charms and captivating manners. He probably intimated his satisfaction by his demeanour, since they urged him to stay among them, promising in that case to provide him with a beautiful wife.

Their surprise was equally great at the complexion of his sable companion. They could not believe it was natural, and tried to rub off the imaginary dye with their hands. As the African bore all this with characteristic good-humour, displaying at the same time his rows of ivory teeth, they were prodigiously delighted. The animals were no less above their comprehension; and when the cock crew, the simple people clapped their hands and inquired what he was

saying. Their intellects were so bewildered by sights so novel that they seemed incapable of distinguishing between man and brute.

Molina was then escorted to the residence of the curaca, whom he found living in much state, with porters stationed at his doors, and with a quantity of gold and silver vessels, from which he was served. He was then taken to different parts of the Indian city, and saw a fortress built of rough stone, and, though low, spreading over a large extent of ground. Near this was a temple; and the Spaniard's description of its decorations, blazing with gold and silver, seemed so extravagant that Pizarro, distrusting his whole account, resolved to send a more discreet and trustworthy emissary on the following day, Pedro de Candia, the Greek cavalier mentioned as one of the first who intimated his intention to share the fortunes of his commander. He was sent on shore, dressed in complete mail, as became a good knight, with his sword by his side, and his arquebuse on his shoulder. The Indians were even more dazzled by his appearance than by Molina's, as the sun fell brightly on his polished armour and glanced from his military weapons. They had heard much of the formidable arquebuse from their townsmen who had come in the vessel, and they besought Candia "to let it speak to them." He accordingly set up a wooden board as a target, and, taking deliberate aim, fired off the musket. The flash of the powder and the startling report of the piece, as the board, struck by the ball, was shivered into splinters, filled the natives with dismay. Some fell on the ground, covering their

MEXICO AND PERU

faces with their hands, and others approached the cavalier with feelings of awe, which were gradually dispelled by the assurance they received from the smiling expression of his countenance.

They then showed him the same hospitable attentions which they had paid to Molina; and his description of the marvels of the place, on his return, fell nothing short of his predecessor's. The fortress, which was surrounded by a triple row of wall, was strongly garrisoned. The temple he described as literally tapestried with plates of gold and silver. Adjoining this structure was a sort of convent appropriated to the Inca's destined brides, "The Virgins of the Sun," who manifested great curiosity to see him. Whether this was gratified is not clear; but Candia described the gardens of the convent, which he entered, as glowing with imitations of fruits and vegetables all in pure gold and silver. He had seen a number of artisans at work, whose sole business seemed to be to furnish these gorgeous decorations for the religious houses.

The Spaniards were nearly mad with joy, says an old writer, at receiving these brilliant tidings of the Peruvian city. All their fond dreams were now to be realized, and they had at length reached the realm which had so long flitted in visionary splendour before them. Pizarro expressed his gratitude to heaven for having crowned his labours with so glorious a result; but he bitterly lamented the hard fate, which, by depriving him of his followers, denied him, at such a moment, the means of availing himself of his success.

THE VOYAGE SOUTHWARDS

HAVING now collected all the information essential to his object, Pizarro, after taking leave of the natives of Tumbez and promising a speedy return, weighed anchor, and again turned his prow towards the south, keeping as near as possible to the coast, that no place of importance might escape his observation. Everywhere he was received with the same spirit of generous hospitality, the natives coming out in their balsas to welcome him, laden with their little cargoes of fruits and vegetables, of all the luscious varieties that grow in the *tierra caliente*. All were eager to have a glimpse of the strangers, the "Children of the Sun," as the Spaniards began already to be called, from their fair complexions, brilliant armour, and the thunderbolts which they bore in their hands. The most favourable reports, too, had preceded them, of the urbanity and gentleness of their manners, thus unlocking the hearts of the simple natives and disposing them to confidence and kindness. The iron-hearted soldier had not yet disclosed the darker side of his character. He was too weak to do so. The hour of conquest had not yet come.

In every place Pizarro received the same accounts of a powerful monarch who ruled over the land, and held his court on the mountain plains of the interior, where his capital was depicted as blazing with gold and silver, and displaying all the profusion of an Oriental satrap. The Spaniards, except at Tumbez, seem to have met with little of the precious metals among the natives on the coast.

Yet the Spaniards met with sufficient evidence of general civilization and power to convince them that there was much foundation for the reports of the natives. Repeatedly they saw structures of stone and plaster, occasionally showing architectural skill in the execution, if not elegance of design. Wherever they cast anchor, they beheld green patches of cultivated country redeemed from the sterility of nature and blooming with the variegated vegetation of the tropics; while a refined system of irrigation, by means of aqueducts and canals, seemed to be spread like a net-work over the surface of the country, making even the desert to blossom as the rose. At many places where they landed they saw the great road of the Incas, which traversed the sea-coast, often, indeed, lost in the volatile sands, where no road could be maintained, but rising into a broad and substantial causeway as it emerged on a firmer soil. Such a provision for internal communication was in itself no slight monument of power and civilization.

Having reached the port of Santa about the ninth degree of southern latitude, Pizarro's followers besought him not to prosecute the voyage farther, and accordingly he returned to Tumbez.

RETURN TO PANAMÁ

PIZARRO SENT TO SPAIN

ON leaving Tumbez, the adventurers steered directly for Panamá, touching only, on their way, at the ill-fated island of Gorgona, to take on board their two companions who were

left there too ill to proceed with them. One had died; and, receiving the other, Pizarro and his gallant little band continued their voyage, and, after an absence of at least eighteen months, found themselves once more safely riding at anchor in the harbour of Panamá.

The sensation caused by their arrival was great, as might have been expected. For there were few, even among the most sanguine of their friends, who did not imagine that they had long since paid for their temerity, and fallen victims to the climate or the natives, or miserably perished in a watery grave. Their joy was proportionably great, therefore, as they saw the wanderers now returned, not only in health and safety, but with certain tidings of the fair countries which had so long eluded their grasp. It is the misfortune of those daring spirits who conceive an idea too vast for their own generation to comprehend, or, at least, to attempt to carry out, that they pass for visionary dreamers. Such had been the fate of Luque and his associates. The existence of a rich Indian empire at the south, which in their minds, dwelling long on the same idea and alive to all the arguments in its favour, had risen to the certainty of conviction, had been derided by the rest of their countrymen as a mere *mirage* of the fancy, which, on nearer approach, would melt into air; while the projectors who staked their fortunes on the adventure were denounced as madmen. But their hour of triumph, their slow and hard-earned triumph, had now arrived.

Yet the governor, Pedro de los Rios, did not seem, even at this moment, to be possessed with

a conviction of the magnitude of the discovery,—or perhaps he was discouraged by its very magnitude. When the associates, now with more confidence, applied to him for patronage in an undertaking too vast for their individual resources, he coldly replied, “He had no desire to build up other states at the expense of his own; nor would he be led to throw away more lives than had already been sacrificed by the cheap display of gold and silver toys and a few Indian sheep!”

In this extremity the fruitful mind of Luque suggested the only expedient by which they could hope for success. This was to apply to the crown itself. No one was so much interested in the result of the expedition. It was for the government, indeed, that discoveries were to be made, that the country was to be conquered. The government alone was competent to provide the requisite means, and was likely to take a much broader and more liberal view of the matter than a petty colonial officer.

But who was there qualified to take charge of this delicate mission? Almagro strongly urged that no one could conduct the affair so well as the party interested in it. He had a high opinion of Pizarro's prudence, his discernment of character, and his cool, deliberate policy. He knew enough of his comrade to have confidence that his presence of mind would not desert him even in the new, and therefore embarrassing, circumstances in which he would be placed at court. No one, he said, could tell the story of their adventures with such effect as the man who had been the chief actor in them; no one

could so well paint the unparelled sufferings and sacrifices which they had encountered.

There was some difficulty in raising the funds necessary for putting the envoy in condition to make a suitable appearance at court; so low had the credit of the confederates fallen, and so little confidence was yet placed in the result of their splendid discoveries. Fifteen hundred ducats were at length raised; and Pizarro, in the spring of 1528, bade adieu to Panamá, accompanied by Pedro de Candia. He took with him, also, some of the natives, as well as two or three llamas, various nice fabrics of cloth, with many ornaments and vases of gold and silver, as specimens of the civilization of the country, and vouchers for his wonderful story.

PIZARRO AT COURT

PIZARRO found the emperor at Toledo, which he was soon to quit, in order to embark for Italy. Spain was not the favourite residence of Charles the Fifth in the earlier part of his reign. He was now at that period of it when he was enjoying the full flush of his triumphs over his gallant rival of France, whom he had defeated and taken prisoner at the great battle of Pavia; and the victor was at this moment preparing to pass into Italy to receive the imperial crown from the hands of the Roman Pontiff.

Pizarro, therefore, who had now come to satisfy the royal eyes, by visible proofs, of the truth of the golden rumours which from time to time had reached Castile, was graciously received by the

emperor. Charles examined the various objects which his officer exhibited to him with great attention. He was particularly interested by the appearance of the llama, so remarkable as the only beast of burden yet known on the new continent; and the fine fabrics of woollen cloth which were made from its shaggy sides gave it a much higher value, in the eyes of the sagacious monarch, than what it possessed as an animal for domestic labour. But the specimens of gold and silver manufacture, and the wonderful tale which Pizarro had to tell of the abundance of the precious metals, must have satisfied even the cravings of royal cupidity.

Pizarro, far from being embarrassed by the novelty of his situation, maintained his usual self-possession, and showed that decorum and even dignity in his address which belong to the Castilian. He spoke in a simple and respectful style, but with the earnestness and natural eloquence of one who had been an actor in the scenes he described, and who was conscious that the impression he made on his audience was to decide his future destiny. All listened with eagerness to the account of his strange adventures by sea and land, his wanderings in the forests, or in the dismal and pestilent swamps on the sea-coast, without food, almost without raiment, with feet torn and bleeding at every step, with his few companions becoming still fewer by disease and death, and yet pressing on with unconquerable spirit to extend the empire of Castile and the name and power of her sovereign; but when he painted his lonely condition on the desolate island,

abandoned by the government at home, deserted by all but a handful of devoted followers, his royal auditor, though not easily moved, was affected to tears.

Notwithstanding the emperor's recommendation, the business of Pizarro went forward at the tardy pace with which affairs are usually conducted in the court of Castile. He found his limited means gradually sinking under the expenses incurred by his present situation, and he represented that unless some measures were speedily taken in reference to his suit, however favourable they might be in the end, he should be in no condition to profit by them. The queen, accordingly, who had charge of the business, on her husband's departure, expedited the affair, and on the twenty-sixth of July, 1529, she executed the memorable *Capitulation* which defined the powers and privileges of Pizarro.

The instrument secured to that chief the right of discovery and conquest in the province of Peru, or New Castile,—as the country was then called, in the same manner as Mexico had received the name of New Spain,—for the distance of two hundred leagues south of Santiago. He was to receive the titles and rank of Governor and Captain-General of the province, together with those of Adelantado and Alguacil Mayor, for life; and he was to have a salary of seven hundred and twenty-five thousand maravedis, with the obligation of maintaining certain officers and military retainers, corresponding with the dignity of his station. He was to have the right to erect certain fortresses, with the absolute

government of them; to assign *encomiendas* of Indians, under the limitations prescribed by law; and, in fine, to exercise nearly all the prerogatives incident to the authority of a viceroy.

His associate, Almagro, was declared commander of the fortress of Tumbez, with an annual rent of three hundred thousand maravedis, and with the further rank and privileges of an hidalgo. The reverend Father Luque received the reward of his services in the bishopric of Tumbez, and he was also declared Protector of the Indians of Peru. He was to enjoy the yearly stipend of a thousand ducats,—to be derived, like the other salaries and gratuities in this instrument, from the revenues of the conquered territory.

ESTRANGEMENT BETWEEN PIZARRO AND ALMAGRO

LANDING IN PERU

PIZARRO set sail for the New World from San Lucar in January, 1530. After a prosperous voyage, the adventurers reached the northern coast of the great southern continent, and anchored off the port of Santa Marta. Here they received such discouraging reports of the countries to which they were bound, of forests teeming with insects and venomous serpents, of huge alligators that swarmed on the banks of the streams, and of hardships and perils such as their own fears had never painted, that several of Pizarro's men deserted, and their leader thinking it no longer safe to

abide in such treacherous quarters, set sail at once for Nombre de Dios.

Soon after his arrival there, he was met by his two associates, Luque and Almagro, who had crossed the mountains for the purpose of hearing from his own lips the precise import of the Capitulation with the crown. Great, as might have been expected, was Almagro's discontent at learning the result of what he regarded as the perfidious machinations of his associate. "Is it thus," he exclaimed, "that you have dealt with the friend who shared equally with you in the trials, the dangers, and the cost of the enterprise, and this, notwithstanding your solemn engagements on your departure to provide for his interests as faithfully as your own? How could you allow me to be thus dishonoured in the eyes of the world by so paltry a compensation, which seems to estimate my services as nothing in comparison with your own?"

Pizarro, in reply, assured his companion that he had faithfully urged his suit, but that the government refused to confide powers which entrenched so closely on one another to different hands. He had no alternative but to accept all himself or to decline all; and he endeavoured to mitigate Almagro's displeasure by representing that the country was large enough for the ambition of both, and that the powers conferred on himself were, in fact, conferred on Almagro, since all that he had would ever be at his friend's disposal, as if it were his own. But these honeyed words did not satisfy the injured party; and the two captains soon after returned to Panama with

feelings of estrangement, if not hostility, towards one another, which did not augur well for their enterprise.

No time was lost in preparing for the voyage. It found little encouragement among the colonists of Panamá. Pizarro, indeed, made slender additions to the force brought over with him from Spain, though his body was in better condition, and, in respect to arms, ammunition, and equipment generally, was on a much better footing, than his former levies. The whole number did not exceed one hundred and eighty men, with twenty-seven horses for the cavalry. He had provided himself with three vessels, two of them of a good size, to take the place of those which he had been compelled to leave on the opposite side of the Isthmus at Nombre de Dios; an armament small for the conquest of an empire, and far short of that prescribed by the Capitulation with the crown. With this the intrepid chief proposed to commence operations, trusting to his own successes, and the exertions of Almagro, who was to remain behind for the present to muster reinforcements.

On St John the Evangelist's day, the banners of the company and the royal standard were consecrated in the cathedral church of Panamá; a sermon was preached before the little army by Fray Juan de Vargas, one of the Dominicans selected by the government for the Peruvian mission; and mass was performed, and the sacrament administered to every soldier previous to his engaging in the crusade against the infidel. Having thus solemnly invoked the blessing of Heaven on the enterprise, Pizarro and his

followers went on board their vessels, which rode at anchor in the Bay of Panamá, and early in January, 1531, sallied forth on his third and last expedition for the conquest of Peru.

It was his intention to steer direct for Tumbez, which held out so magnificent a show of treasure on his former voyage. But head-winds and currents, as usual, baffled his purpose, and after a run of thirteen days, much shorter than the period formerly required for the same distance, his little squadron came to anchor in the Bay of St Matthew, about one degree north; and Pizarro, after consulting with his officers, resolved to disembark his forces and advance along the coast, while the vessels held their course at a convenient distance from the shore.

The march of the troops was severe and painful in the extreme; for the road was constantly intersected by streams, which, swollen by the winter rains, widened at their mouths into spacious estuaries. Pizarro, who had some previous knowledge of the country, acted as guide as well as commander of the expedition. He was ever ready to give aid where it was needed, encouraging his followers to ford or swim the torrents as they best could, and cheering the responding by his own buoyant and courageous spirit.

THE SPANIARDS SACK THEIR FIRST INDIAN TOWN

At length they reached a thick-settled hamlet, or rather town, in the province of Coaque. The Spaniards rushed on the place, and the inhabitants,

without offering resistance, fled in terror to the neighbouring forests, leaving their effects—of much greater value than had been anticipated—in the hands of the invaders. “We fell on them, sword in hand,” says one of the Conquerors, with some *naïveté*; “for if we had advised the Indians of our approach, we should never have found there such store of gold and precious stones.” The natives, however, according to another authority, stayed voluntarily; “for, as they had done no harm to the white men, they flattered themselves none would be offered to them, but that there would be only an interchange of good offices with the strangers,”—an expectation founded, it may be, on the good character which the Spaniards had established for themselves on their preceding visit, but one in which the simple people now found themselves most unpleasantly deceived.

Rushing into the deserted dwellings, the invaders found there, besides stuffs of various kinds, and food most welcome in their famished condition, a large quantity of gold and silver wrought into clumsy ornaments, together with many precious stones; for this was the region of the *esmeraldas*, or emeralds, where that valuable gem was most abundant. One of these jewels, that fell into the hands of Pizarro in this neighbourhood, was as large as a pigeon’s egg. Unluckily, his rude followers did not know the value of their prize; and they broke many of them in pieces by pounding them with hammers. They were led to this extraordinary proceeding, it is said, by one of the Dominican missionaries, Fray Reginaldo de Pedraza, who assured them that this was the way to prove

the true emerald, which could not be broken. It was observed that the good father did not subject his own jewels to this wise experiment; but as the stones, in consequence of it, fell in value, being regarded merely as coloured glass, he carried back a considerable store of them to Panamá.

The gold and silver ornaments rifled from the dwellings were brought together and deposited in a common heap; when a fifth was deducted for the crown, and Pizarro distributed the remainder in due proportions among the officers and privates of his company. This was the usage invariably observed on the like occasions throughout the Conquest. The invaders had embarked in a common adventure. Their interest was common, and to have allowed every one to plunder on his own account would only have led to insubordination and perpetual broils. All were required, therefore, on pain of death, to contribute whatever they obtained, whether by bargain or by rapine, to the general stock; and all were too much interested to allow any culprit to escape.

REPORTED TREACHERY OF THE PEOPLE OF PUNÁ

EXCUSE FOR A MASSACRE

THE inhabitants of Tumbez no sooner heard of Pizarro's arrival on the island than, trusting probably to their former friendly relations with him, they came over in some number to the Spanish quarters. The presence of their detested rivals was by no means grateful to the jealous inhabitants

of Puná, and the prolonged residence of the white men on their island could not be otherwise than burdensome. In their outward demeanour they still maintained the same show of amity; but Pizarro's interpreters again put him on his guard against the proverbial perfidy of their hosts. With his suspicions thus roused, the Spanish commander was informed that a number of the chiefs had met together to deliberate on a plan of insurrection. Not caring to wait for the springing of the mine, he surrounded the place of meeting with his soldiers and made prisoners of the suspected chieftains. According to one authority, they confessed their guilt. This is by no means certain. Nor is it certain that they meditated an insurrection. Yet the fact is not improbable in itself, though it derives little additional probability from the assertion of the hostile interpreters. It is certain, however, that Pizarro was satisfied of the existence of a conspiracy; and without further hesitation, he abandoned his wretched prisoners, ten or twelve in number, to the tender mercies of their rivals of Tumbez, who instantly massacred them before his eyes.

Maddened by this outrage, the people of Puná sprang to arms, and threw themselves at once, with fearful yells and the wildest menaces of despair, on the Spanish camp. The odds of numbers were greatly in their favour, for they mustered several thousand warriors. But the more decisive odds of arms and discipline were on the side of their antagonists; and, as the Indians rushed forward in a confused mass to the assault, the Castilians coolly received them on their long

piques or swept them down by the volleys of their musketry. Their ill-protected bodies were easily cut to pieces by the sharp sword of the Spaniard; and Hernando Pizarro, putting himself at the head of the cavalry, charged boldly into the midst, and scattered them far and wide over the field, until, panic-struck by the terrible array of steel-clad horsemen and the stunning reports and the flash of fire-arms, the fugitives sought shelter in the depths of their forests. Yet the victory was owing, in some degree, at least,—if we may credit the Conquerors,—to the interposition of Heaven; for St Michael and his legions were seen high in the air above the combatants, contending with the arch-enemy of man and cheering on the Christians by their example!

Not more than three or four Spaniards fell in the fight; but many were wounded, and among them Hernando Pizarro, who received a severe injury in the leg from a javelin. Nor did the war end here; for the implacable islanders, taking advantage of the cover of night, or of any remissness on the part of the invaders, were ever ready to steal out of their fastnesses and spring on their enemy's camp, while, by cutting off his straggling parties and destroying his provisions, they kept him in perpetual alarm.

In this uncomfortable situation, the Spanish commander was gladdened by the appearance of two vessels off the island. They brought a reinforcement consisting of a hundred volunteers, besides horses for the cavalry. It was commanded by Hernando de Soto, a captain afterwards famous as the discoverer of the Mississippi, which still rolls

its majestic current over the place of his burial,— a fitting monument for his remains, as it is of his renown.

THE CIVIL WAR IN PERU

HUAYNA CAPAC, the Inca of Peru, was distinguished for military capacity, and political ability. Under this prince, the whole of the powerful state of Quito, which rivalled that of Peru itself in wealth and refinement, was brought under the sceptre of the Incas ; whose empire received by this conquest the most important accession yet made to it since the foundation of the dynasty of Manco Capac. The remaining days of the victorious monarch were passed in reducing the independent tribes on the remote limits of his territory, and still more in cementing his conquests by the introduction of the Peruvian polity. He was actively engaged in completing the great works of his father, especially the highroads which led from Quito to the capital. He perfected the establishment of posts, took great pains to introduce the Quichua dialect throughout the Empire, promoted a better system of agriculture, and, in fine, encouraged the different branches of domestic industry. Under his sway the Peruvian reached its most palmy state.

The first arrival of the white men on the South American shores of the Pacific was about ten years before the death of Huayna Capac, when Balboa crossed the Gulf of St Michael and obtained the first clear report of the empire of the Incas. Whether tidings of these adventurers reached the Indian monarch's ears is doubtful. There is no

doubt, however, that he obtained the news of the first expedition under Pizarro and Almagro, when the latter commander penetrated as far as the Rio de San Juan, about the fourth degree north. The accounts which he received made a strong impression on the mind of Huayna Capac. He discerned in the formidable prowess and weapons of the invaders proofs of a civilization far superior to that of his own people. He intimated his apprehension that they would return, and that at some day, not far distant perhaps, the throne of the Incas might be shaken by these strangers endowed with such incomprehensible powers. Huayna Capac himself, calling his great officers around him, as he found he was drawing near his end, announced the subversion of his empire by the race of white and bearded strangers, as the consummation predicted by the oracles after the reign of the twelfth Inca, and he enjoined it on his vassals not to resist the decrees of Heaven, but to yield obedience to its messengers. His death took place about seven years before Pizarro's arrival in Puná. He had divided his kingdom between his two sons Huascar and Atahualpa, and for nearly five years after the death of Huayna Capac, the royal brothers reigned, each over his allotted portion of the empire, without distrust of one another, or, at least, without collision. It seemed as if the wish of their father was to be completely realised, and that the two states were to maintain their respective integrity and independence as much as if they had never been united into one. It would not have endured so long, but for the more gentle temper of Huascar, the only party who had ground

for complaint. He was four or five years older than his brother, and was possessed of courage not to be doubted; but he was a prince of a generous and easy nature, and perhaps, if left to himself, might have acquiesced in an arrangement which, however unpalatable, was the will of his deified father. But Atahualpa was of a different temper. War-like, ambitious, and daring, he was constantly engaged in enterprises for the enlargement of his own territory; though his crafty policy was scrupulous not to aim at extending his acquisitions in the direction of his royal brother. His restless spirit, however, excited some alarm at the court of Cuzco, and Huascar at length sent an envoy to Atahualpa, to remonstrate with him on his ambitious enterprises, and to require him to render him homage for his kingdom of Quito.

Atahualpa at once took up arms, and in two bloody battles defeated his brother, captured his capital city of Cuzco, and took him prisoner. The news of the great victory was borne on the wings of the wind to Caxamalca; and loud and long was the rejoicing, not only in the camp of Atahualpa, but in the town and surrounding country; for all now came in, eager to offer their congratulations to the victor and do him homage. The prince of Quito no longer hesitated to assume the scarlet *borla*, the diadem of the Incas. His triumph was complete. He had beaten his enemies on their own ground, had taken their capital, had set his foot on the neck of his rival, and won for himself the ancient sceptre of the Children of the Sun. But the hour of triumph was destined to be that of his deepest humiliation. Atahualpa was not one of

those to whom, in the language of the Grecian bard, "the gods are willing to reveal themselves."

PIZARRO STRIKES INTO THE INTERIOR

PIZARRO now passed over from Puná to Tumbes. This port was only a few leagues distant and Pizarro with the greater part of his followers passed over in the ships, while a few others were to transport the commander's baggage and the military stores on some of the Indian balsas (rafts). One of the latter vessels which first touched the shore was surrounded, and the three persons who were on the raft were carried off by the natives to the adjacent woods and there massacred.

This conduct of the natives of Tumbes is not easy to be explained, considering the friendly relations maintained with the Spaniards on their preceding visit. But Pizarro was still more astonished on entering their town to find it not only deserted but, with the exception of a few buildings, entirely demolished. Four or five of the most substantial private dwellings, the great temple, and the fortress—and these greatly damaged, and wholly despoiled of their interior decorations—alone survived to mark the site of the city and attest its former splendour. Pizarro despatched a small body of troops in pursuit of the fugitives; and, after some slight skirmishing, they got possession of several of the natives, and among them, as it chanced, the curaca of the place. When brought before the Spanish commander, he exonerated himself from any share in the violence offered to the white men, saying that it was done by a lawless party of his

people, without his knowledge at the time; and he expressed his willingness to deliver them up to punishment, if they could be detected. He explained the dilapidated condition of the town by the long wars carried on with the fierce tribes of Puná, who had at length succeeded in getting possession of the place and driving the inhabitants into the neighbouring woods and mountains. The Inca, to whose cause they were attached, was too much occupied with his own feuds to protect them against their enemies.

He decided to leave a part of his force at Tumbez, and with the remainder to make an excursion into the interior and reconnoitre the land, before deciding on any plan of operations. He set out early in May, 1532, and, keeping along the more level regions, himself, sent a small detachment under the command of Hernando de Soto to explore the skirts of the vast sierra.

He maintained a rigid discipline on the march, commanding his soldiers to abstain from all acts of violence, and punishing disobedience in the most prompt and resolute manner. The natives rarely offered resistance. When they did so, they were soon reduced, and Pizarro, far from adopting vindictive measures, was open to the first demonstrations of submission. By this lenient and liberal policy he soon acquired a name among the inhabitants which effaced the unfavourable impressions made of him in the earlier part of the campaign. The natives, as he marched through the thick-settled hamlets which sprinkled the level region between the Cordilleras and the ocean, welcomed him with rustic hospitality, providing

good quarters for his troops, and abundant supplies, which cost but little in the prolific soil of the *tierra caliente*.

At the expiration of some three or four weeks spent in reconnoitring the country, Pizarro came to the conclusion that the most eligible site for his new capital was in the rich valley of Tangarala, thirty leagues south of Tumbes, traversed by more than one stream that opens a communication with the ocean. To this spot, accordingly, he ordered the men left at Tumbes to repair at once in their vessels; and no sooner had they arrived than busy preparations were made for building up the town in a manner suited to the wants of the colony. Timber was procured from the neighbouring woods, stones were dragged from their quarries, and edifices gradually rose, some of which made pretensions to strength, if not to elegance. Among them were a church, a magazine for public stores, a hall of justice, and a fortress. A municipal government was organized, consisting of regidores, alcaldes, and the usual civic functionaries.

In his late tour of observation the Spanish commander had gathered much important intelligence in regard to the state of the kingdom. He had ascertained the result of the struggle between the Inca brothers, and that the victor now lay with his army encamped at the distance of only ten or twelve days' journey from San Miguel. It is possible that the Spanish general, even so early as the period of his residence in San Miguel, may have meditated some daring stroke, some effective *coup de main*, which, like that of Cortés when he

carried off the Aztec monarch to his quarters, might strike terror into the hearts of the people and at once decide the fortunes of the day. It is more probable, however, that he now only proposed to present himself before the Inca as the peaceful representative of a brother monarch, and by these friendly demonstrations disarm any feeling of hostility, or even of suspicion. When once in communication with the Indian prince, he could regulate his future course by circumstances.

On the 24th of September, 1532, five months after landing at Tumbez, Pizarro marched out at the head of his little body of adventurers from the gates of San Miguel, having enjoined it on the colonists to treat their Indian vassals with humanity, and to conduct themselves in such a manner as to secure the goodwill of the surrounding tribes.

On the fifth day after leaving San Miguel, Pizarro halted in one of these delicious valleys, to give his troops repose and to make a more complete inspection of them. Their number amounted in all to one hundred and seventy-seven, of which sixty-seven were cavalry. He mustered only three arquebusiers in his whole company, and a few crossbow-men, altogether not exceeding twenty. The troops were tolerably well equipped, and in good condition.

FIRST MEETING WITH THE INCA

It was late in the afternoon of the fifteenth of November, 1532, when the Conquerors entered the city of Caxamalca. The weather, which had

been fair during the day, now threatened a storm, and some rain mingled with hail—for it was unusually cold—began to fall. Pizarro, however, was so anxious to ascertain the dispositions of the Inca that he determined to send an embassy at once to his quarters. He selected for this Hernando de Soto with fifteen horse, and after his departure, conceiving that the number was too small in case of any unfriendly demonstrations by the Indians, he ordered his brother Hernando to follow with twenty additional troopers. This captain and one other of his party have left us an account of the excursion.

Between the city and the imperial camp was a causeway, built in a substantial manner across the meadow-land that intervened. Over this the cavalry galloped at a rapid pace, and before they had gone a league they came in front of the Peruvian encampment, where it spread along the gentle slope of the mountains. The lances of the warriors were fixed in the ground before their tents, and the Indian soldiers were loitering without, gazing with silent astonishment at the Christian cavalcade, as with clangour of arms and shrill blast of trumpet it swept by, like some fearful apparition on the wings of the wind.

The party soon came to a broad but shallow stream, which, winding through the meadow, formed a defence for the Inca's position. Across it was a wooden bridge; but the cavaliers, distrusting its strength, preferred to dash through the waters, and without difficulty gained the opposite bank. A battalion of Indian warriors was drawn up under arms on the farther side of

the bridge, but they offered no molestation to the Spaniards ; and these latter had strict orders from Pizarro—scarcely necessary in their present circumstances—to treat the natives with courtesy. One of the Indians pointed out the quarter occupied by the Inca.

It was an open courtyard, with a light building or pleasure-house in the centre, having galleries running round it, and opening in the rear on a garden. The walls were covered with a shining plaster, both white and coloured, and in the area before the edifice was seen a spacious tank or reservoir of stone, fed by aqueducts that supplied it with both warm and cold water. A basin of hewn stone—it may be of a more recent construction—still bears, on the spot, the name of the “Inca’s bath.” The court was filled with Indian nobles, dressed in gaily-ornamented attire, in attendance on the monarch, and with women of the royal household. Amidst this assembly it was not difficult to distinguish the person of Atahualpa, though his dress was simpler than that of his attendants. But he wore on his head the crimson *borla* or fringe, which, surrounding the forehead, hung down as low as the eyebrow. This was the well-known badge of Peruvian sovereignty, and had been assumed by the monarch only since the defeat of his brother Huascar. He was seated on a low stool or cushion, somewhat after the Morisco or Turkish fashion, and his nobles and principal officers stood around him with great ceremony, holding the stations suited to their rank.

The Spaniards gazed with much interest on the

prince, of whose cruelty and cunning they had heard so much, and whose valour had secured to him the possession of the empire. But his countenance exhibited neither the fierce passions nor the sagacity which had been ascribed to him; and though in his bearing he showed a gravity and a calm consciousness of authority well becoming a king, he seemed to discharge all expression from his features, and to discover only the apathy so characteristic of the American races.

Hernando Pizarro and Soto, with two or three only of their followers, slowly rode up in front of the Inca; and the former, making a respectful obeisance, but without dismounting, informed Atahualpa that he came as an ambassador from his brother, the commander of the white men, to acquaint the monarch with their arrival in his city of Caxamalca. They were the subjects of a mighty prince across the waters, and had come, he said, drawn thither by the report of his great victories, to offer their services, and to impart to him the doctrines of the true faith which they professed; and he brought an invitation from the general to Atahualpa that the latter would be pleased to visit the Spaniards in their present quarters.

To all this the Inca answered not a word; nor did he make even a sign of acknowledgment that he comprehended it; though it was translated for him by Felipillo, one of the interpreters. He remained silent, with his eyes fastened on the ground; but one of his nobles, standing by his side, answered, "It is well." This was an embarrassing situation for the Spaniards, who

seemed to be as far from ascertaining the real disposition of the Peruvian monarch towards themselves as when the mountains were between them.

In a courteous and respectful manner, Hernando Pizarro again broke the silence by requesting the Inca to speak to them himself and to inform them what was his pleasure. To this Atahualpa condescended to reply, while a faint smile passed over his features, "Tell your captain that I am keeping a fast, which will end to-morrow morning. I will then visit him, with my chieftains. In the meantime, let him occupy the public buildings on the square, and no other, till I come, when I will order what shall be done."

Soto, one of the party present at this interview, as before noticed, was the best mounted and perhaps the best rider in Pizarro's troop. Observing that Atahualpa looked with some interest on the fiery steed that stood before him, champing the bit and pawing the ground with the natural impatience of a war-horse, the Spaniard gave him the rein, and, striking his iron heel into his side, dashed furiously over the plain, then, wheeling him round and round, displayed all the beautiful movements of his charger and his own excellent horsemanship. Suddenly checking him in full career, he brought the animal almost on his haunches, so near the person of the Inca that some of the foam that flecked his horse's sides was thrown on the royal garments. But Atahualpa maintained the same marble composure as before, though several of his soldiers, whom De Soto passed in the course, were so much disconcerted by it that they drew back in manifest terror,—an

act of timidity for which they paid dearly *if*, as the Spaniards assert, Atahualpa caused them to be put to death that same evening for betraying such unworthy weakness to the strangers.

PIZARRO HOLDS A COUNCIL OF WAR

PIZARRO summoned a council of his officers, to consider the plan of operations, or rather to propose to them the extraordinary plan on which he had himself decided. This was to lay an ambuscade for the Inca and take him prisoner in the face of his whole army! It was a project full of peril,—bordering, as it might well seem, on desperation. But the circumstances of the Spaniards were desperate. Whichever way they turned, they were menaced by the most appalling dangers; and better was it bravely to confront the danger than weakly to shrink from it, when there was no avenue for escape.

Their only remedy, was to turn the Inca's arts against himself; to take him, if possible, in his own snare. There was no time to be lost; for any day might bring back the victorious legions who had recently won his battles at the south, and thus make the odds against the Spaniards far greater than now.

Yet to encounter Atahualpa in the open field would be attended with great hazard; and, even if victorious, there would be little probability that the person of the Inca, of so much importance, would fall into their hands.

The invitation he had so unsuspectingly accepted to visit them in their quarters afforded the best means for securing this desirable prize. Nor was

the enterprise so desperate, considering the great advantages afforded by the character and weapons of the invaders and the unexpectedness of the assault. The mere circumstance of acting on a concerted plan would alone make a small number more than a match for a much larger one. But it was not necessary to admit the whole of the Indian force into the city before the attack; and the person of the Inca once secured, his followers, astounded by so strange an event, were they few or many, would have no heart for further resistance; and with the Inca once in his power, Pizarro might dictate laws to the empire.

In this daring project of the Spanish chief it was easy to see that he had the brilliant exploit of Cortés in his mind when he carried off the Aztec monarch in his capital.

Pizarro having concerted his plans for the following day, the council broke up, and the chief occupied himself with providing for the security of the camp during the night. The approaches to the town were defended; sentinels were posted at different points, especially on the summit of the fortress, where they were to observe the position of the enemy and to report any movement that menaced the tranquillity of the night. After these precautions, the Spanish commander and his followers withdrew to their appointed quarters,—but not to sleep.

PIZARRO'S PLOT

THE clouds of the evening had passed away, and the sun rose bright on the following morning,

the most memorable epoch in the annals of Peru. It was Saturday, the sixteenth of November, 1532. The loud cry of the trumpet called the Spaniards to arms with the first streak of dawn; and Pizarro, briefly acquainting them with the plan of the assault, made the necessary dispositions.

The *plaza*, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, was defended on its three sides by low ranges of buildings, consisting of spacious halls with wide doors or vomitories opening into the square. In these halls he stationed his cavalry in two divisions, one under his brother Hernando, the other under De Soto. The infantry he placed in another of the buildings, reserving twenty chosen men to act with himself as occasion might require. Pedro de Candia, with a few soldiers and the artillery—comprehending under this imposing name two small pieces of ordnance, called falconets—he established in the fortress. All received orders to wait at their posts till the arrival of the Inca. After his entrance into the great square, they were still to remain under cover, withdrawn from observation, till the signal was given by the discharge of a gun, when they were to cry their war-cries, to rush out in a body from their covert, and, putting the Peruvians to the sword, bear off the person of the Inca. The arrangement of the immense halls, opening on a level with the *plaza*, seemed to be contrived on purpose for a *coup de théâtre*. Pizarro particularly inculcated order and implicit obedience, that in the hurry of the moment there should be no confusion. Everything depended on their acting with concert, coolness, and celerity.

The chief next saw that their arms were in good order, and that the breastplates of their horses were garnished with bells, to add by their noise to the consternation of the Indians. Refreshments were also liberally provided, that the troops should be in condition for the conflict. These arrangements being completed, mass was performed with great solemnity by the ecclesiastics who attended the expedition; the God of Battles was invoked to spread his shield over the soldiers who were fighting to extend the empire of the Cross; and all joined with enthusiasm in the chant, "*Exsurge, Domine,*" "Rise, O Lord! and judge thine own cause." One might have supposed them a company of martyrs about to lay down their lives in defence of their faith, instead of a licentious band of adventurers meditating one of the most atrocious acts of perfidy on the record of history!

It was late in the day before any movement was visible in the Peruvian camp, where much preparation was making to approach the Christian quarters with due state and ceremony. A message was received from Atahualpa, informing the Spanish commander that he should come with his warriors fully armed, in the same manner as the Spaniards had come to his quarters the night preceding. This was not an agreeable intimation to Pizarro, though he had no reason, probably, to expect the contrary. But to object might imply distrust, or perhaps disclose, in some measure, his own designs. He expressed his satisfaction, therefore, at the intelligence, assuring the Inca that, come as he would, he would be received by him as a friend and brother.

It was noon before the Indian procession was on its march, when it was seen occupying the great causeway for a long extent. In front came a large body of attendants, whose office seemed to be to sweep away every particle of rubbish from the road. High above the crowd appeared the Inca, borne on the shoulders of his principal nobles, while others of the same rank marched by the sides of his litter, displaying such a dazzling show of ornaments on their persons that, in the language of one of the Conquerors, "they blazed like the sun." But the greater part of the Inca's forces mustered along the fields that lined the road, and were spread over the broad meadows as far as the eye could reach.

ATTEMPT TO CONVERT 'THE INCA

It was not long before sunset when the van of the royal procession entered the gates of the city. First came some hundreds of the menials, employed to clear the path of every obstacle, and singing songs of triumph as they came, "which in our ears," says one of the Conquerors, "sounded like the songs of hell!" Then followed other bodies of different ranks, and dressed in different liveries. Some wore a showy stuff, checkered white and red, like the squares of a chess-board. Others were clad in pure white, bearing hammers or maces of silver or copper; and the guards, together with those in immediate attendance on the prince, were distinguished by a rich azure livery and a profusion of gay orna-

ments, while the large pendants attached to the ears indicated the Peruvian noble.

Elevated high above his vassals came the Inca Atahualpa, borne on a sedan or open litter, on which was a sort of throne made of massive gold of inestimable value. The palanquin was lined with the richly coloured plumes of tropical birds, and studded with shining plates of gold and silver. The monarch's attire was much richer than on the preceding evening. Round his neck was suspended a collar of emeralds of uncommon size and brilliancy. His short hair was decorated with golden ornaments, and the imperial *borla* encircled his temples. The bearing of the Inca was sedate and dignified; and from his lofty station he looked down on the multitudes below with an air of composure, like one accustomed to command.

As the leading files of the procession entered the great square, larger, says an old chronicler, than any square in Spain, they opened to the right and left for the royal retinue to pass. Everything was conducted with admirable order. The monarch was permitted to traverse the *plaza* in silence, and not a Spaniard was to be seen. When some five or six thousand of his people had entered the place, Atahualpa halted, and, turning round with an enquiring look, demanded, "Where are the strangers?"

At this moment Fray Vicente de Valverde, a Dominican friar, Pizarro's chaplain, and afterwards Bishop of Cuzco, came forward with his breviary, or, as other accounts say, a Bible in one hand and a crucifix in the other, and, approaching the Inca, told him that he came by order

of his commander to expound to him the doctrines of the true faith, for which purpose the Spaniards had come from a great distance to his country. The friar then explained, as clearly as he could, the mysterious doctrine of the Trinity, and, ascending high in his account, began with the creation of man, thence passed to his fall, to his subsequent redemption by Jesus Christ, to the crucifixion and the ascension, when the Saviour left the Apostle Peter as his Vicegerent upon earth. This power had been transmitted to the successors of the apostle, good and wise men, who, under the title of Popes, held authority over all powers and potentates on earth. One of the last of these Popes had commissioned the Spanish emperor, the most mighty monarch in the world, to conquer and convert the natives in this Western hemisphere; and his general, Francisco Pizarro, had now come to execute this important mission. The friar concluded with beseeching the Peruvian monarch to receive him kindly, to abjure the errors of his own faith, and embrace that of the Christians now proffered to him, the only one by which he could hope for salvation; and, furthermore, to acknowledge himself a tributary of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, who, in that event, would aid and protect him as his loyal vassal.

Whether Atahualpa possessed himself of every link in the curious chain of argument by which the monk connected Pizarro with St Peter, may be doubted. It is certain, however, that he must have had very incorrect notions of the Trinity, if, as Garcilasso states, the interpreter Felipillo

explained it by saying that "the Christians believed in three Gods and one God, and that made four." But there is no doubt he perfectly comprehended that the drift of the discourse was to persuade him to resign his sceptre and acknowledge the supremacy of another.

The eyes of the Indian monarch flashed fire, and his dark brow grew darker, as he replied, "I will be no man's tributary. I am greater than any prince upon earth. Your emperor may be a great prince; I do not doubt it, when I see that he has sent his subjects so far across the waters; and I am willing to hold him as a brother. As for the Pope of whom you speak, he must be crazy to talk of giving away countries which do not belong to him. For my faith, he continued, "I will not change it. Your own God, as you say, was put to death by the very men whom he created. But mine," he concluded, pointing to his Deity,—then, alas! sinking in glory behind the mountains,—"my God still lives in the heavens and looks down on his children."

He then demanded of Valverde by what authority he had said these things. The friar pointed to the book which he held, as his authority. Atahualpa, taking it, turned over the pages a moment, then, as the insult he had received probably flashed across his mind, he threw it down with vehemence, and exclaimed, "Tell your comrades that they shall give me an account of their doings in my land. I will not go from here till they have made me full satisfaction for all the wrongs they have committed.

The friar, greatly scandalized by the indignity

offered to the sacred volume, stayed only to pick it up, and, hastening to Pizarro, informed him of what had been done, exclaiming, at the same time, "Do you not see that while we stand here wasting our breath in talking with this dog, full of pride as he is, the fields are filling with Indians? Set on at once : I absolve you."

THE CAPTURE OF THE INCA ATAHUALLPA

PIZARRO saw that the hour had come. He waved a white scarf in the air, the appointed signal. The fatal gun was fired from the fortress. Then springing into the square, the Spanish captain and his followers shouted the old war-cry of "St Jago and at them!" It was answered by the battle-cry of every Spaniard in the city, as, rushing from the avenues of the great halls in which they were concealed, they poured into the *plaza*, horse and foot, each in his own dark column, and threw themselves into the midst of the Indian crowd. The latter, taken by surprise, stunned by the report of artillery and muskets, the echoes of which reverberated like thunder from the surrounding buildings, and blinded by the smoke which rolled in sulphurous volumes along the square, were seized with a panic. They knew not whither to fly for refuge from the coming ruin. Nobles and commoners,—all were trampled down under the fierce charge of the cavalry, who dealt their blows, right and left, without sparing; while their swords, flashing through the thick gloom, carried dismay into the

hearts of the wretched natives, who now for the first time saw the horse and his rider in all their terrors. They made no resistance,—as, indeed, they had no weapons with which to make it. Every avenue to escape was closed, for the entrance to the square was choked up with the dead bodies of men who had perished in vain efforts to fly; and such was the agony of the survivors under the terrible pressure of their assailants, that a large body of Indians, by their convulsive struggles, burst through the wall of stone and dried clay which formed part of the boundary of the *plaza*! It fell, leaving an opening of more than a hundred paces, through which multitudes now found their way into the country, still hotly pursued by the cavalry, who, leaping the fallen rubbish, hung on the rear of the fugitives, striking them down in all directions.

Meanwhile the fight, or rather massacre, continued hot round the Inca, whose person was the great object of the assault. His faithful nobles, rallying about him, threw themselves in the way of the assailants, and strove, by tearing them from their saddles, or at least by offering their own bosoms as a mark for their vengeance, to shield their beloved master. It is said by some authorities that they carried weapons concealed under their clothes. If so, it availed them little, as it is not pretended that they used them. But the most timid animal will defend itself when at bay. That the Indians did not do so in the present instance is proof that they had no weapons to use. Yet they still continued to force back the cavaliers, clinging to their horses with dying

grasp, and, as one was cut down, another, taking the place of his fallen comrade with a loyalty truly affecting.

The Indian monarch, stunned and bewildered, saw his faithful subjects falling around him without fully comprehending his situation. The litter on which he rode heaved to and fro, as the mighty press swayed backwards and forwards; and he gazed on the overwhelming ruin, like some forlorn mariner, who, tossed about in his bark by the furious elements, sees the lightning's flash and hears the thunder bursting around him with the consciousness that he can do nothing to avert his fate. At length, weary with the work of destruction, the Spaniards, as the shades of evening grew deeper, felt afraid that the royal prize might, after all, elude them; and some of the cavaliers made a desperate attempt to end the affray at once by taking Atahualpa's life. But Pizarro, who was nearest his person, called out, with stentorian voice, "Let no one who values his life strike at the Inca!" and, stretching out his arm to shield him, received a wound on the hand from one of his own men,—the only wound received by a Spaniard in the action.

The struggle now became fiercer than ever round the royal litter. It reeled more and more, and at length, several of the nobles who supported it having been slain, it was overturned, and the Indian prince would have come with violence to the ground, had not his fall been broken by the efforts of Pizarro and some other of the cavaliers, who caught him in their arms. The imperial *borla* was instantly snatched from his

temples by a soldier named Estete, and the unhappy monarch, strongly secured, was removed to a neighbouring building, where he was carefully guarded.

All attempt at resistance now ceased. The fate of the Inca soon spread over town and country. The charm which might have held the Peruvians together was dissolved. Every man thought only of his own safety. Even the soldiery encamped on the adjacent fields took the alarm, and, learning the fatal tidings, were seen flying in every direction before their pursuers, who in the heat of triumph showed no touch of mercy. At length night, more pitiful than man, threw her friendly mantle over the fugitives, and the scattered troops of Pizarro rallied once more at the sound of the trumpet in the bloody square of Caxamalca.

The number of slain is reported, as usual, with great discrepancy. Pizarro's secretary says two thousands natives fell. A descendant of the Incas—a safer authority than Garcilasso—swells the number to ten thousand. Truth is generally found somewhere between the extremes. The slaughter was incessant, for there was nothing to check it. That there should have been no resistance will not appear strange when we consider the fact that the wretched victims were without arms, and that their senses must have been completely overwhelmed by the strange and appalling spectacle which burst on them so unexpectedly.

THE INCA AFTER HIS CAPTURE

THAT night Pizarro kept his engagement with the Inca, since he had Atahualpa to sup with him. The banquet was served in one of the halls facing the great square, which a few hours before had been the scene of slaughter, and the payment of which was still encumbered with the dead bodies of the Inca's subjects. The captive monarch was placed next his conqueror. He seemed like one who did not yet fully comprehend the extent of his calamity. If he did, he showed an amazing fortitude. "It is the fortune of war," he said; and, if we may credit the Spaniards, he expressed his admiration of the adroitness with which they had contrived to entrap him in the midst of his own troops. He added that he had been made acquainted with the progress of the white men from the hour of their landing, but that he had been led to undervalue their strength from the insignificance of their numbers. He had no doubt he should be easily able to overpower them, on their arrival at Caxamalca, by his superior strength; and as he wished to see for himself what manner of men they were, he had suffered them to cross the mountains, meaning to select such as he chose for his own service, and, getting possession of their wonderful arms and horses, put the rest to death.

That such may have been Atahualpa's purpose is not improbable. It explains his conduct in not occupying the mountain-passes, which afforded such strong points of defence against invasion. But that a prince so astute, as by the general testi-

mony of the Conquerors he is represented to have been, should have made so impolitic a disclosure of his hidden motives, is not so probable. The intercourse with the Inca was carried on chiefly by means of the interpreter Felipillo, or *little Philip* as he was called, from his assumed Christian name, —a malicious youth, as it appears, who bore no good-will to Atahualpa, and whose interpretations were readily admitted by the Conquerors, eager to find some pretext for their bloody reprisals.

Atahualpa, as elsewhere noticed, was at this time about thirty years of age. He was well made, and more robust than usual with his countrymen. His head was large, and his countenance might have been called handsome, but that his eyes, which were bloodshot, gave a fierce expression to his features. He was deliberate in speech, grave in manner, and towards his own people stern even to severity; though with the Spaniards he showed himself affable, sometimes even indulging in sallies of mirth.

Pizarro paid every attention to his royal captive and endeavoured to lighten, if he could not dispel, the gloom which, in spite of his assumed equanimity, hung over the monarch's brow. He besought him not to be cast down by his reverses, for his lot had only been that of every prince who had resisted the white men. They had come into the country to proclaim the gospel, the religion of Jesus Christ; and it was no wonder they had prevailed, when his shield was over them. Heaven had permitted that Atahualpa's pride should be humbled, because of his hostile intentions towards the Spaniards and the insult he had offered to the

sacred volume. But he bade the Inca take courage and confide in him, for the Spaniards were a generous race, warring only against those who made war on them, and showing grace to all who submitted! Atahualpa may have thought the massacre of that day an indifferent commentary on this vaunted lenity.

THE SPANIARD'S LUST FOR GOLD

THE party sent to pillage the Inca's pleasure house brought back a rich booty in gold and silver, consisting chiefly of plate for the royal table which greatly astonished the Spaniards by its size and weight. These as well as some large emeralds obtained there, together with the precious spoils found on the bodies of the Indian nobles who had perished in the massacre, were placed in safe custody, to be hereafter divided. In the city of Caxamalca the troops also found magazines stored with goods, both cotton and woollen, far superior to any they had seen, for fineness of texture and the skill with which the various colours were blended. They were piled from the floors to the very roofs of the buildings, and in such quantity that every soldier had provided himself with what he desired; it made no sensible diminution of the whole amount.

Pizarro would now gladly have directed his march on the Peruvian capital. But the distance was great, and his force was small. This must have been still further crippled by the guard required for the Inca, and the chief feared to involve himself deeper in a hostile empire so

populous and powerful, with a prize so precious in his keeping. With much anxiety, therefore, he looked for reinforcements from the colonies ; and he despatched a courier to San Miguel, to inform the Spaniards there of his recent successes, and to ascertain if there had been any arrival from Panamá. Meanwhile he employed his men in making Caxamalca a more suitable residence for a Christian host, by erecting a church, or, perhaps, appropriating some Indian edifice to this use, in which mass was regularly performed by the Dominican fathers with great solemnity. The dilapidated walls of the city were also restored in a more substantial manner than before, and every vestige was soon effaced of the hurricane that had so recently swept over it.

It was not long before Atahualpa discovered, amidst all the show of religious zeal in his Conquerors, a lurking appetite more potent in most of their bosoms than either religion or ambition. This was the love of gold. He determined to avail himself of it to procure his own freedom. The critical posture of his affairs made it important that this should not be long delayed. His brother Huascar, ever since his defeat, had been detained as a prisoner, subject to the victor's orders. He was now at Andamarca, at no great distance from Caxamalca ; and Atahualpa feared, with good reason, that, when his own imprisonment was known, Huascar would find it easy to corrupt his guards, make his escape, and put himself at the head of the contested empire without a rival to dispute it.

In the hope, therefore, to effect his purpose by

appealing to the avarice of his keepers, he one day told Pizarro that if he would set him free he would engage to cover the floor of the apartment on which they stood with gold. Those present listened with an incredulous smile; and as the Inca received no answer, he said, with some emphasis, that "he would not merely cover the floor, but would fill the room with gold as high as he could reach;" and, standing on tiptoe, he stretched out his hand against the wall. All stared in amazement, for the apartment was 17 feet broad, 22 feet long, and the height touched by the Inca was 9 feet. Pizarro agreed.

IMMENSE AMOUNT OF TREASURE

THE Spaniards had patiently waited till the return of the emissaries from Cuzco swelled the treasure to a large amount, though still below the stipulated limit. But now their avarice got the better of their forbearance, and they called loudly for the immediate division of the gold. To wait longer would only be to invite the assault of their enemies, allured by a bait so attractive. While the treasure remained uncounted, no man knew its value, nor what was to be his own portion. It was better to distribute it at once, and let every one possess and defend his own. Several, moreover, were now disposed to return home and take their share of the gold with them, where they could place it in safety. But these were few; while much the larger part were only anxious to leave their present quarters and march at once

to Cuzco. More gold, they thought, awaited them in that capital than they could get here by prolonging their stay; while every hour was precious, to prevent the inhabitants from secreting their treasures, of which design they had already given indication.

Pizarro was especially moved by the last consideration; and he felt that without the capital he could not hope to become master of the empire. Without further delay, the division of the treasure was agreed upon.

Yet, before making this, it was necessary to reduce the whole to ingots of a uniform standard, for the spoil was composed of an infinite variety of articles, in which the gold was of very different degrees of purity. These articles consisted of goblets, ewers, salvers, vases, of every shape and size, ornaments and utensils for the temples of the royal palaces, tiles and plates for the decoration of the public edifices, curious imitations of different plants and animals. Among the plants, the most beautiful was the Indian corn, in which the golden ear was sheathed in its broad leaves of silver, from which hung a rich tassel of threads of the same precious metal. A fountain was also much admired, which sent up a sparkling jet of gold, while birds and animals of the same material played in the waters at its base. The delicacy of the workmanship of some of these, and the beauty and ingenuity of the design, attracted the admiration of better judges than the rude Conquerors of Peru.

Before breaking up these specimens of Indian art, it was determined to send a quantity, which

should be deducted from the royal fifth, to the emperor. It would serve as a sample of the ingenuity of the natives, and would show him the value of his conquests. A number of the most beautiful articles was selected, of the value of a hundred thousand ducats, and Hernando Pizarro was appointed to be the bearer of them to Spain. He was to obtain an audience of Charles, and at the same time that he laid the treasures before him he was to give an account of the proceedings of the Conquerors, and to seek a further augmentation of their powers and dignities.

No man in the army was better qualified for this mission, by his address and knowledge of affairs, than Hernando Pizarro; no one would be so likely to urge his suit with effect at the haughty Castilian court. But other reasons influenced the selection of him at the present juncture.

The business of melting down the plate was intrusted to the Indian goldsmiths, who were thus required to undo the work of their own hands. They toiled day and night, but such was the quantity to be recast that it consumed a full month. When the whole was reduced to bars of a uniform standard, they were nicely weighed under the superintendence of the royal inspectors. The total amount of the gold was found to be one million three hundred and twenty-six thousand five hundred and thirty-nine *pesos de oro*, which, allowing for the greater value of money in the sixteenth century, would be equivalent, probably, at the present time, to near *three millions and a half of pounds sterling*, or somewhat less than *fifteen*

millions and a half of dollars. The quantity of silver was estimated at fifty-one thousand six hundred and ten marks. History affords no parallel of such a booty—and that, too, in the most convertible form, in ready money, as it were—having fallen to the lot of a little band of military adventurers, like the Conquerors of Peru. The great object of the Spanish expeditions in the New World was gold. It is remarkable that their success should have been so complete. Had they taken the track of the English, the French, or the Dutch, on the shores of the northern continent, how different would have been the result! It is equally worthy of remark that the wealth thus suddenly acquired, by diverting them from the slow but surer and more permanent sources of national prosperity, has in the end glided from their grasp and left them among the poorest of the nations of Christendom.

The royal fifth was first deducted, including the remittance already sent to Spain. The share appropriated by Pizarro amounted to fifty-seven thousand two hundred and twenty-two pesos of gold, and two thousand three hundred and fifty marks of silver. He had besides this the great chair or throne of the Inca, of solid gold, and valued at twenty-five thousand *pesos de oro*. To his brother Hernando were paid thirty-one thousand and eighty pesos of gold, and two thousand three hundred and fifty marks of silver. De Soto received seventeen thousand seven hundred and forty pesos of gold, and seven hundred and twenty-four marks of silver. Most of the remaining cavalry, sixty in number, received

each eight thousand eight hundred and eighty pesos of gold, and three hundred and sixty-two marks of silver, though some had more, and a few considerably less. The infantry mustered in all one hundred and five men. Almost one-fifth of them were allowed, each, four thousand four hundred and forty pesos of gold and one hundred and eighty marks of silver, half of the compensation of the troopers. The remainder received one-fourth part less; though here again there were exceptions, and some were obliged to content themselves with a much smaller share of the spoil.

PIZARRO'S DASTARDLY CRIME AGAINST THE INCA

MEANWHILE the old rumours of a meditated attack by the natives began to be current among the soldiers. They were repeated from one to another, gaining something by every repetition. An immense army, it was reported, was mustering at Quito the land of Atahualpa's birth, and thirty thousand Caribs were on their way to support it. The Caribs were distributed by the early Spaniards rather indiscriminately over the different parts of America, being invested with peculiar horrors as a race of cannibals.

The rumours of a rising among the natives pointed to Atahualpa as the author of it. Chalcuchima was examined on the subject, but avowed his entire ignorance of any such design, which he pronounced a malicious slander. Pizarro next laid the matter before the Inca himself, repeating to him the stories in circulation with the

air of one who believed them. "What treason is this," said the general, "that you have meditated against me,—me, who have ever treated you with honour, confiding in your words, as in those of a brother?" "You jest," replied the Inca, who perhaps did not feel the weight of this confidence; "you are always jesting with me. How could I or my people think of conspiring against men so valiant as the Spaniards? Do not jest with me thus, I beseech you." "This," continues Pizarro's secretary, "he said in the most composed and natural manner, smiling all the while to dissemble his falsehood, so that we were all amazed to find such cunning in a barbarian."

But it was not with cunning, but with the consciousness of innocence, as the event afterwards proved, that Atahualpa thus spoke to Pizarro. He readily discerned, however, the causes, perhaps the consequences, of the accusation. He saw a dark gulf opening beneath his feet; and he was surrounded by strangers, on none of whom he could lean for counsel or protection. The life of the captive monarch is usually short; and Atahualpa might have learned the truth of this, when he thought of Huascar. Bitterly did he now lament the absence of Hernando Pizarro, for, strange as it may seem, the haughty spirit of this cavalier had been touched by the condition of the royal prisoner, and he had treated him with a deference which won for him the peculiar regard and confidence of the Indians. Yet the latter lost no time in endeavouring to efface the general's suspicions

and to establish his own innocence. "Am I not," said he to Pizarro, "a poor captive in your hands? How could I harbour the designs you impute to me, when I should be the first victim of the outbreak? And you little know my people, if you think that such a movement would be made without my orders; when the very birds in my dominions," said he, with somewhat of an hyperbole, "would scarcely venture to fly contrary to my will."

But these protestations of innocence had little effect on the troops; among whom the story of a general rising of the natives continued to gain credit every hour. A large force, it was said, was already gathered at Huamachuco, not a hundred miles from the camp.

The charges preferred against the Inca, drawn up in the form of interrogatories, were twelve in number. The most important were, that he had usurped the crown and assassinated his brother Huascar; that he had squandered the public revenues since the conquest of the country by the Spaniards, and lavished them on his kindred and his minions; that he was guilty of idolatry, and of adulterous practices, indulging openly in a plurality of wives; finally that he had attempted to excite an insurrection against the Spaniards.

These charges, most of which had reference to national usages, or to the personal relations of the Inca, over which the Spanish conquerors had clearly no jurisdiction, are so absurd that they might well provoke a smile, did they not excite a deeper feeling. The last of the charges was

the only one of moment in such a trial; and the weakness of this may be inferred from the care taken to bolster it up with the others. The mere specification of the articles must have been sufficient to show that the doom of the Inca was already sealed.

A number of Indian witnesses were examined, and their testimony, filtrated through the interpretation of Felipillo, received, it is said, when necessary, a very different colouring from that of the original. The examination was soon ended, and "a warm discussion," as we are assured by one of Pizarro's own secretaries, "took place in respect to the probable good or evil that would result from the death of Atahualpa." It was a question of expediency. He was found guilty,—whither of all the crimes alleged we are not informed,—and he was sentenced to be burnt alive in the great square of Caxamalca. The sentence was to be carried into execution that very night. They were not even to wait for the return of De Soto, when the information he would bring would go far to establish the truth or the falsehood of the reports respecting the insurrection of the natives. It was desirable to obtain the countenance of Father Valverde to these proceedings, and a copy of the judgment was submitted to the friar for his signature, which he gave without hesitation, declaring that, "in his opinion, the Inca, at all events, deserved death."

Yet there were some few in that martial conclave who resisted these high-handed measures. They considered them as a poor requital of all the favours bestowed on them by the Inca, who

hitherto had received at their hands nothing but wrong. They objected to the evidence as wholly insufficient, and they denied the authority of such a tribunal to sit in judgment on a sovereign prince in the heart of his dominions.

When the sentence was communicated to the Inca he was greatly overcome by it. For a moment the overwhelming conviction of it unmanned him and he exclaimed with tears in his eyes, "What have I or my children done to deserve such a fate."

In the most piteous tones he then implored that his life might be spared promising any guarantee that might be required for the safety of every Spaniard in the army,—promising double the ransom he had already paid if time were only given him to obtain. An eyewitness assures us that Pizarro was visibly affected as he turned away from the Inca to whose appeal he had no power to listen in opposition to the voice of the Army, and to his sense of what was due to the security of the country. Atahualpa, finding he had no power to turn his conqueror from his purpose, recovered his habitual self-possession, and from that moment submitted himself to his fate with the courage of an Indian warrior.

THE EXECUTION OF THE INCA

PRIESTLY MUMMERIES AND CRUELITIES

THE doom of the Inca was proclaimed by sound of trumpet in the great square of Caxamalca; and, two hours after sunset, the Spanish soldiery

assembled by torch-light in the *plaza* to witness the execution of the sentence. It was on the twenty-ninth of August, 1533. Atahualpa was led out chained hand and foot,—for he had been kept in irons ever since the great excitement had prevailed in the army respecting an assault. Father Vicente de Valverde was at his side, striving to administer consolation, and, if possible, to persuade him at this last hour to abjure his superstition and embrace the religion of his Conquerors. He was willing to save the soul of his victim from the terrible expiation in the next world to which he had so cheerfully consigned his mortal part in this.

During Atahualpa's confinement, the friar had repeatedly expounded to him the Christian doctrines, and the Indian monarch discovered much acuteness in apprehending the discourse of his teacher. But it had not carried conviction to his mind, and though he listened with patience, he had shown no disposition to renounce the faith of his fathers. The Dominican made a last appeal to him in this solemn hour; and when Atahualpa was bound to the stake, with the fagots that were to kindle his funeral pile lying around him, Valverde, holding up the cross, besought him to embrace it and be baptized, promising that, by so doing, the painful death to which he had been sentenced should be commuted for the milder form of the *garrote*,—a mode of punishment by strangulation, used for criminals in Spain.

The unhappy monarch asked if this were really so, and on its being confirmed by Pizarro he consented to abjure his own religion and receive

baptism. The ceremony was performed by Father Valverde, and the new convert received the name of Juan de Atahualpa,—the name of Juan being conferred in honour of John the Baptist on whose day the event took place.

Atahualpa expressed a desire that his remains might be transported to Quito, the place of his birth, to be preserved with those of his maternal ancestors. Then, turning to Pizarro, as a last request, he implored him to take compassion on his young children and receive them under his protection. Was there no other one in that dark company who stood grimly around him, to whom he could look for the protection of his offspring? Perhaps he thought there was no other so competent to afford it, and that the wishes so solemnly expressed in that hour might meet with respect even from his Conqueror. Then recovering his stoical bearing, which for a moment had been shaken, he submitted himself calmly to his fate, while the Spaniards gathering around, muttered their credos for the salvation of his soul. Thus, by the death of a vile malefactor, perished the last of the Incas.

A day or two after these tragic events, Hernando de Soto returned from his excursion. Great was his astonishment and indignation at learning what had been done in his absence. He sought out Pizarro at once, and found him, says the chronicler, "with a great felt hat, by way of mourning, slouched over his eyes," and in his dress and demeanour exhibiting all the show of sorrow. "You have acted rashly," said De Soto to him bluntly; "Atahualpa has been basely

slandered. There was no enemy at Huamachuco; no rising among the natives. I have met with nothing on the road but demonstrations of goodwill, and all is quiet. If it was necessary to bring the Inca to trial, he should have been taken to Castile and judged by the emperor. I would have pledged myself to see him safe on board the vessel." Pizarro confessed that he had been precipitate, and said that he had been deceived by Riquelme, Valverde, and the others. These charges soon reached the ears of the treasurer and the Dominican, who, in their turn, exculpated themselves, and upbraided Pizarro to his face, as the only one responsible for the deed. The dispute ran high; and the parties were heard by the by-standers to give one another the lie! This vulgar squabble among the leaders, so soon after the event, is the best commentary on the iniquity of their own proceedings and the innocence of the Inca. The treatment of Atahualpa, from first to last, forms undoubtedly one of the darkest chapters in Spanish colonial history.

CONSEQUENCES OF SPANISH POLICY

PIZARRO LEAVES CAXAMALCA FOR CUZCO

THE Inca of Peru was its sovereign in a peculiar sense. He received an obedience from his vassals more implicit than that of any despot; for his authority reached to the most secret conduct,—to the thoughts of the individual. He was revered as more than human. He was not merely the head of the state, but the point to which all its

institutions converged as to a common centre,—the keystone of the political fabric which must fall to pieces by its own weight when that was withdrawn. So it fared on the death of Atahualpa. His death not only left the throne vacant, without any certain successor, but the manner of it announced to the Peruvian people that a hand stronger than that of their Incas had now seized the sceptre, and that the dynasty of the Children of the Sun had passed away forever.

The natural consequences of such a conviction followed. The beautiful order of the ancient institutions was broken up, as the authority which controlled it was withdrawn. The Indians broke out into greater excesses from the uncommon restraint to which they had been before subjected. Villages were burnt, temples and palaces were plundered, and the gold they contained was scattered or secreted. Gold and silver acquired an importance in the eyes of the Peruvian, when he saw the importance attached to them by his conquerors. The precious metals, which before served only for purposes of state or religious decoration, were now hoarded up and buried in caves and forests. The gold and silver concealed by the natives were affirmed greatly to exceed in quantity that which fell into the hands of the Spaniards. The remote provinces now shook off their allegiance to the Incas. Their great captains, at the head of distant armies, set up for themselves. Ruminavi, a commander on the borders of Quito, sought to detach that kingdom from the Peruvian empire, and to reassert its ancient independence. The country, in short, was in that state in which

old things are passing away and the new order of things has not yet been established. It was in a state of revolution.

The authors of the revolution, Pizarro and his followers, remained meanwhile at Caxamalca. But the first step of the Spanish commander was to name a successor to Atahualpa. It would be easy to govern under the venerated authority to which the homage of the Indians had been so long paid; and it was not difficult to find a successor. The true heir to the crown was a second son of Huayna Capac, named Manco, a legitimate son of the unfortunate Huascar. All thoughts were now turned eagerly toward Cusco, of which the most glowing accounts were circulated among the soldiers, and whose temples and royal palaces were represented as blazing with gold and silver. With imaginations thus excited, Pizarro and his entire company amounting to almost 500 men, of whom nearly one-third were cavalry, took their departure early in September from Caxamalca—a place ever memorable as the scene of some of the most strange and sanguinary scenes recorded in history.

On the way to Cuzco, Pizarro was surprised by a visit from a Peruvian noble, who came in great state, attended by a numerous and showy retinue. It was the young prince Manco, brother of the unfortunate Huascar, and the rightful successor to the crown. Being brought before the Spanish commander, he announced his pretensions to the throne and claimed the protection of the strangers. It is said he had meditated resisting them by arms, and had encouraged the assaults made on them on

their march, but finding resistance ineffectual, he had taken this politic course, greatly to the displeasure of his more resolute nobles. However this may be, Pizarro listened to his application with singular contentment, for he saw in this new scion of the true royal stock a more effectual instrument for his purposes than he could have found in the family of Quito, with whom the Peruvians had but little sympathy. He received the young man, therefore, with great cordiality, and did not hesitate to assure him that he had been sent into the country by his master, the Castilian sovereyn, in order to vindicate the claims of Huascar to the crown, and to punish the usurpation of his rival.

Taking with him the Indian prince, Pizarro now resumed his march. It was interrupted for a few hours by a party of the natives, who lay in wait for him in the neighbouring sierra. A sharp skirmish ensued, in which the Indians behaved with great spirit and inflicted some little injury on the Spaniards; but the latter at length, shaking them off, made good their passage through the defile, and the enemy did not care to follow them into the open country.

FIRST SIGHT OF CUZCO

THE TREASURE FOUND THERE

It was late in the afternoon when the Conquerors came in sight of Cuzco. The descending sun was streaming his broad rays full on the imperial city, where many an altar was dedicated to his worship. The low ranges of buildings, showing in his beams

like so many lines of silvery light, filled up the bosom of the valley and the lower slopes of the mountains, whose shadowy forms hung darkly over the fair city, as if to shield it from the menaced profanation. It was so late that Pizarro resolved to defer his entrance till the following morning.

That night vigilant guard was kept in the camp, and the soldiers slept on their arms. But it passed away without annoyance from the enemy; and early on the following day, November 15th, 1533, Pizarro prepared for his entrance into the Peruvian capital.

The little army was formed into three divisions, of which the centre, or "battle," as it was called, was led by the general. The suburbs were thronged with a countless multitude of the natives, who had flocked from the city and the surrounding country to witness the showy and, to them, startling pageant. All looked with eager curiosity on the strangers, the fame of whose terrible exploits had spread to the remotest parts of the empire. They gazed with astonishment on their dazzling arms and fair complexions, which seemed to proclaim them the true Children of the Sun; and they listened with feelings of mysterious dread as the trumpet sent forth its prolonged notes through the streets of the capital, and the solid ground shook under the heavy tramp of the cavalry.

The Spanish commander rode directly up the great square. It was surrounded by low piles of buildings, among which were several palaces of the Incas. One of these, erected by Huayna Capac, was surmounted by a tower, while the ground-floor was occupied by one or more immense

halls, like those described in Caxamalca, where the Peruvian nobles held their *fêtes* in stormy weather. These buildings afforded convenient barracks for the troops, though during the first few weeks they remained under their tents in the open *plaza*, with their horses picketed by their side, ready to repulse any insurrection of the inhabitants.

The capital of the Incas, though falling short of the *El Dorado* which had engaged their credulous fancies, astonished the Spaniards by the beauty of its edifices, the length and regularity of its streets, and the good order and appearance of comfort, even luxury, visible in its numerous population. It far surpassed all they had yet seen in the New World. The population of the city is computed by one of the Conquerors at two hundred thousand inhabitants, and that of the suburbs at as many more. But however it may be exaggerated, it is certain that Cuzco was the metropolis of a great empire, the residence of the court and the chief nobility; frequented by the most skilful mechanics and artisans of every description, who found a demand for their ingenuity in the royal precincts; while the place was garrisoned by a numerous soldiery, and was the resort, finally, of emigrants from the most distant provinces.

The most important building was the fortress, planted on a solid rock that rose boldly above the city. It was built of hewn stone, so finely wrought that it was impossible to detect the line of junction between the blocks; and the approaches to it were defended by three semicircular parapets, composed of such heavy masses of rock that it bore resemblance to the kind of work known to architects as

the Cyclopean. The fortress was raised to a height rare in Peruvian architecture; and from the summit of the tower the eye of the spectator ranged over a magnificent prospect, in which the wild features of the mountain scenery, rocks, woods, and waterfalls, were mingled with the rich verdure of the valley, and the shining city filling up the foreground,—all blended in sweet harmony under the deep azure of a tropical sky.

The streets were long and narrow. They were arranged with perfect regularity, crossing one another at right angles; and from the great square diverged four principal streets connecting with the high-roads of the empire. The square itself, and many parts of the city, were paved with a fine pebble. Through the heart of the capital ran a river of pure water, if it might not be rather termed a canal, the banks or sides of which, for the distance of twenty leagues, were faced with stone. Across this stream, bridges, constructed of similar broad flags, were thrown at intervals, so as to afford an easy communication between the different quarters of the capital.

The most sumptuous edifice in Cuzco in the times of the Incas was undoubtedly the great temple dedicated to the Sun, which, studded with gold plates, as already noticed, was surrounded by convents and dormitories for the priests, with their gardens and broad parterres sparkling with gold. The exterior ornaments had been already removed by the Conquerors,—all but the frieze of gold, which, embedded in the stones, still encircled the principal building.

Pizarro, on entering Cuzco, had issued an order

forbidding any soldier to offer violence to the dwellings of the inhabitants. But the palaces were numerous, and the troops lost no time in plundering them of their contents, as well as in despoiling the religious edifices. The interior decorations supplied them with considerable booty. They stripped off the jewels and rich ornaments that garnished the royal mummies in the temple of Coricancha. Indignant at the concealment of their treasures, they put the inhabitants, in some instances to the torture, and endeavoured to extort from them a confession of their hiding-places. They invaded the repose of the sepulchres, in which the Peruvians often deposited their valuable effects, and compelled the grave to give up its dead. No place was left unexplored by the rapacious Conquerors; and they occasionally stumbled on a mine of wealth that rewarded their labours.

NEW INCA CROWNED : THE CONQUEST COMPLETED : LIMA FOUNDED

THE first care of the Spanish general, after the division of the booty, was to place Manco on the throne, and to obtain for him the recognition of his countrymen. He, accordingly, presented the young prince to them as their future sovereign, the legitimate son of Huayna Capac, and the true heir of the Peruvian sceptre. The annunciation was received with enthusiasm by the people, attached to the memory of his illustrious father, and pleased that they were still to have a monarch rule over them of the ancient line of Cuzco.

Everything was done to maintain the illusion

with the Indian population. The ceremonies of a coronation were studiously observed. The young prince kept the prescribed fasts and vigils; and on the appointed day the nobles and the people, with the whole Spanish soldiery, assembled in the great square of Cuzco to witness the concluding ceremony. Mass was publicly performed by Father Valverde, and the Inca Manco received the fringed diadem of Peru, not from the hand of the high-priest of his nation, but from his conqueror, Pizarro. The Indian lords then tendered their obeisance in the customary form; after which the royal notary read aloud the instrument asserting the supremacy of the Castilian crown, and requiring the homage of all present to its authority. This address was explained by an interpreter, and the ceremony of homage was performed by each one of the parties waving the royal banner of Castile twice or thrice with his hands. Manco then pledged the Spanish commander in a golden goblet of the sparkling *chicha*; and, the latter having cordially embraced the new monarch, the trumpets announced the conclusion of the ceremony. But it was not the note of triumph, but of humiliation; for it proclaimed that the armed foot of the stranger was in the halls of the Peruvian Incas; that the ceremony of coronation was a miserable pageant; that their prince himself was but a puppet in the hands of his conqueror; and that the glory of the Children of the Sun had departed forever!

Yet the people readily yielded to the illusion, and seemed willing to accept this image of their ancient independence. The accession of the young

monarch was greeted by all the usual *fêtes* and rejoicings. The mummies of his royal ancestors, with such ornaments as were still left to them, were paraded in the great square.

Pizarro's next concern was to organize a municipal government for Cuzco, like those in the cities of the parent country. Two *alcaldes* were appointed and eight *regidores*, among which last functionaries were his brothers Gonzalo and Juan. The oaths of office were administered with great solemnity, on the twenty-fourth of March, 1534, in presence both of Spaniards and Peruvians, in the public square; as if the general were willing by this ceremony to intimate to the latter that, while they retained the semblance of their ancient institutions, the real power was henceforth vested in their conquerors.

Nor did the chief neglect the interests of religion. Father Valverde, whose nomination as Bishop of Cuzco not long afterwards received the Papal sanction, prepared to enter on the duties of his office. A place was selected for the cathedral of his diocese, facing the *plaza*. A spacious monastery subsequently rose on the ruins of the gorgeous House of the Sun; its walls were constructed of the ancient stones; the altar was raised on the spot where shone the bright image of the Peruvian deity, and the cloisters of the Indian temple were trodden by the friars of St Dominic. To make the metamorphosis more complete, the House of the Virgins of the Sun was replaced by a Roman Catholic Nunnery. Christian churches and monasteries gradually supplanted the ancient edifices, and such of the

latter as were suffered to remain, despoiled of their heathen insignia, were placed under the protection of the Cross.

The Fathers of St Dominic, the Brethren of the Order of Mercy, and other missionaries, now busied themselves in the good work of conversion. We have seen that Pizarro was required by the crown to bring out a certain number of these holy men in his own vessels; and every succeeding vessel brought an additional reinforcement of ecclesiastics. They were not all like the Bishop of Cuzco, with hearts so seared by fanaticism as to be closed against sympathy with the unfortunate natives. They were, many of them, men of singular humility, who followed in the track of the conqueror to scatter the seeds of spiritual truth.

The reduction of Peru might now be considered as, in a manner, accomplished. Some barbarous tribes in the interior, it is true, still held out, and Alonso de Alvarado, a prudent and able officer, was employed to bring them into subjection. Benalcazar was still at Quito, of which he was subsequently appointed governor by the crown. There he was laying deeper the foundation of Spanish power, while he advanced the line of conquest still higher towards the north. But Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Indian monarchy, had submitted. The armies of Atahualpa had been beaten and scattered. The empire of the Incas was dissolved, and the prince who now wore the Peruvian diadem was but the shadow of a king, who held his commission from his conqueror.

The first act of the governor was to determine

on the site of the future capital of this vast colonial empire. Cuzco, withdrawn among the mountains, was altogether too far removed from the sea-coast for a commercial people. The little settlement of San Miguel lay too far to the north. It was desirable to select some more central position, which could be easily found in one of the fruitful valleys that bordered the Pacific. Such was that of Pachacamac, which Pizarro now occupied. But, on further examination, he preferred the neighbouring valley of Rimac, which lay to the north, and which took its name, signifying in the Quichua tongue "one who speaks," from a celebrated idol, whose shrine was much frequented by the Indians for the oracles it delivered. Through the valley flowed a broad stream, which, like a great artery, was made, as usual, by the natives, to supply a thousand finer veins that meandered through the beautiful meadows.

On this river Pizarro fixed the site of his new capital, at somewhat less than two leagues' distance from its mouth, which expanded into a commodious haven for the commerce that the prophetic eye of the founder saw would one day—and no very distant one—float on its waters. The central situation of the spot recommended it as a suitable residence for the Peruvian viceroy, whence he might hold easy communication with the different parts of the country and keep vigilant watch over his Indian vassals. The climate was delightful though only twelve degrees south of the line.

The name bestowed on the infant capital was

Ciudad de los Reyes, or City of the Kings, in honour of the day, being the sixth of January, 1535,—the festival of Epiphany,—when it was said to have been founded, or more probably when its site was determined, as its actual foundation seems to have been twelve days later. But the Castilian name ceased to be used even within the first generation, and was supplanted by that of Lima, into which the original Indian name of Rimac was corrupted by the Spaniards.

RELIGION OF THE PERUVIANS

THE Peruvians, like so many other of the Indian races, acknowledged a Supreme Being the Creator and Ruler of the Universe which they adored under the different names of Pachacamac and Viracocha. No temple was raised to this invisible Being, save one only in the valley which took its name from the deity himself, not far from the Spanish city of Lima. Even this temple had existed there before the country came under the sway of the Incas, and was the great resort of Indian pilgrims from remote parts of the land,—a circumstance which suggests the idea that the worship of this Great Spirit, though countenanced, perhaps, by their accommodating policy, did not originate with the Peruvian princes.

The deity whose worship they especially inculcated, and which they never failed to establish wherever their banners were known to penetrate, was the Sun. It was he who, in a particular manner, presided over the destinies of man; gave light and warmth to the nations, and

life to the vegetable world : whom they revered as the father of their royal dynasty, the founder of their empire ; and whose temples rose in every city and almost every village throughout the land, while his altars smoked with burnt-offerings,—a form of sacrifice peculiar to the Peruvians among the semi-civilized nations of the New World.

Besides the Sun, the Incas acknowledged various objects of worship in some way or other connected with this principal deity. Such was the Moon, his sister-wife ; the Stars, revered as part of her heavenly train,—though the fairest of them, Venus, known to the Peruvians by the name of Chasca, or the “ youth with the long and curling locks,” was adored as the page of the Sun, whom he attends so closely in his rising and in his setting. They dedicated temples also to the Thunder and Lightning, in whom they recognized the Sun’s dread ministers, and to the rainbow, whom they worshipped as a beautiful emanation of their glorious deity.

In addition to these, the subjects of the Incas enrolled among their inferior deities many objects in nature, as the elements, the winds, the earth, the air, great mountains and rivers, which impressed them with ideas of sublimity and power, or were supposed in some way or other to exercise a mysterious influence over the destinies of man. They adopted also a notion, not unlike that professed by some of the schools of ancient philosophy, that everything on earth had its archetype or idea, its *mother*, as they emphatically styled it, which they held sacred, as, in some sort, its spiritual essence. But their system, far from

being limited even to these multiplied objects of devotion, embraced within its ample folds the numerous deities of the conquered nations, whose images were transported to the capital, where the burdensome charges of their worship were defrayed by their respective provinces. It was a rare stroke of policy in the Incas, who could thus accommodate their religion to their interests.

When any portion of the kingdom or of the recent conquests showed a spirit of disaffection, it was not uncommon to cause part of the population to remove to a distant part of the kingdom, their places being occupied by newcomers drawn from the districts to which the disaffected ones were sent. These emigrants were named *Mitimaes*, and they were accustomed to take their local gods with them, so that worship in the rural districts became of a somewhat mixed character. No Peruvian was too low for the fostering vigilance of the government, none was so high that he was not made to feel his dependence upon it in every act of his life. The government of the Incas (in religion as in all else) was the mildest but the most searching of despotisms.

NOTES

MEXICO

- P. 1, l. 19. *First blossoms of that literature*: Hallam, in his Introduction to the *Literature of Europe*, says that learning was not deficient in Spain during the fifteenth century, though admitting that the rapid improvements made at its close, and about the beginning of the next age, were, due to Lebrixa's public instruction at Seville and Salamanca. Dr M'Crie, in his *History of the Reformation in Spain*, says that Lebrixa, usually styled Nebriassensis, became to Spain what Valla was to Italy, Erasmus to Germany, or Budzus to France. After a residence of ten years in Italy, during which he stored his mind with various kinds of knowledge, he returned home . . . with the view of promoting classical literature in his native country. . . . By the lectures which he read in the Universities of Seville, Salamanca, and Alcala, and by the institutes which he published on Castilian, Latin, Greek and Hebrew Grammar, Lebrixa contributed in a wonderful degree to expel barbarism from the seats of education, and to diffuse a taste for elegant and useful studies among his countrymen.
- P. 1, l. 24. *Important acquisitions* both in Europe and Africa. The Low Countries and the Canaries.
- P. 2, l. 8. *Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella*, wife of Philip II. of Burgundy and mother of Emperor Charles V. She was insane during the greater part of her life.
- P. 2, l. 13. *Cardinal Ximenes*: Francisco Ximenes de Cisneros (1436-1517), one of the greatest statesmen and ecclesiastics of the sixteenth century, the confidential adviser and confessor of Queen Isabella. He munificently endowed the University of Alcala and published the famous Complutensian Polyglot Bible, an undertaking which cost him half a million ducats.
- P. 2, l. 32. *Bay of Honduras*, the name sometimes of old applied to the whole Gulf, but which properly speaking should be only used to include the inner portion of it. It has sometimes also been applied to Omoa Bay.

- P. 3, l. 1. *Nunen de Balboa*, the first European known to history who reached the Pacific Ocean from the Atlantic side. Armed with sword and buckler he rushed into the waters of the Pacific and cried out, in the true chivalrous vein, that he claimed this unknown sea with all it contained for the King of Castille, and that he would make good the claim against all, Christian or infidel, who dared to gainsay it.
- P. 3, l. 33. *Hispaniola*—the first settlement planted by Columbia in 1492, is, save Cuba, the largest of the West India Islands, is now divided into the independent states of Hayti and the Dominican Republic. The seat of the Spanish colonial government was long maintained there.
- P. 5, l. 5. *Cape Catoche*—the extreme easterly point of Yucatan.
- P. 14, l. 2. *Caravels*—light sailing-vessels; *brigantines* of that day differed widely from the brigantines of to-day, which are two-masted vessels with the mainmast of a schooner and the foremast of a brig: the ancient brigantines were only half decked and sometimes undecked.
- P. 14, l. 12. *Arquebus* was an old-fashioned hand-gun though sometimes fired from a stand: *falconet*, a small field gun in use till the sixteenth century.
- P. 16, l. 23. *Cacique*, an Indian chief or territorial lord among the ancient Mexicans and Peruvians.
- P. 17, l. 8. *Aztecs*, the second great wave of immigrants which entered Mexico from the North. The Toltecs were the first, to whom are due all the great architectural undertakings that raise our wonder to-day among the buried cities of South and Central America: then came the Aztecs, more warlike and fierce, yet less pure and noble.
- P. 20, l. 16. *Quetzalcoatl*—the god of the air, a divinity who during his residence on earth instructed the natives in the use of metals, in agriculture, and in the arts of government. In consequence of this he incurred the wrath of the higher deities and had to leave earth. The story of Prometheus seems hinted at in this legend.
- P. 25, l. 5. *Tlapallan*, the Aztec Vale of Avillion—the Islands of the Blest.
- P. 27, l. 5. *The conspiracy to return home*—a plot among the timid ones to abandon the enterprize, to seize the vessels and to return to Hispaniola.
- P. 28, l. 1. *Worms had eaten, etc.*: the action of the teredo or shipworm. This is why the bottoms of ships are sheathed in copper.

- P. 33, l. 14. *Thirty thousand*: even this estimate is too large. As this was one of four armies maintained by the Tlascalans, and as the whole nation did not number more than half a million souls, even the lower estimate is out of the question.
- P. 33, l. 26. *Featherwork-mail*: Southey refers to this in *Madox* (Pt. 1, Canto 7):—

"Not half so gorgeous for their Mayday mirth
All wreathed and ribanded our youths and maids
As these stern Tlascalans in ~~war~~ attire
The golden glitterance and the feather-mail
More gay than glittering gold—"

The Mexican *plumaje* or featherwork: with this they could produce all the effect of a beautiful mosaic. The gorgeous plumage of the tropical birds, especially of the parrot tribe, afforded every variety of colour, and the fine down of the humming bird, which revelled in swarms among the honeysuckle bowers of Mexico, supplied them with soft aerial tints which gave an exquisite finish to the picture. The feathers pasted on a fine cotton web were wrought into dresses for the wealthy, hangings for apartments and ornaments for the temples. The art is now wholly extinct.

- P. 33, l. 27. *Drum*: Clavigero says the drum was still used by the Indians in his day and that it could be easily heard at a distance of three miles.
- P. 37, l. 4. *Banners*: the Mexicans carried their banners in the centre of the host and the Tlascalans in the rear.
- P. 44, l. 22. *More spiritualised religion*. Some divines have found in these teachings of the Toltec God and high priest the germs of some of the great mysteries of the Christian faith, such as those of the Incarnation and the Trinity.
- P. 59, l. 11. *Last of the Palæologi*: Palæologus was the name of an illustrious Byzantine family, which appeared in history about the eleventh century and ascended the throne of Constantinople in the person of Michael VIII. in 1260. The last of the dynasty fell fighting against the Turks at the Fall of Constantinople in 1453.
- P. 55, l. 29 ff. *Such was the beautiful vision*: all later travellers agree in praising the beauty of this wonderful valley. The effect of it upon the soldiers of Cortés was similar to that produced upon the soldiers of Hannibal by the plains of Italy, or by the sight of the sea on the Ten Thousand Greeks as recorded by Xenophon.
- P. 63, l. 27. *Ghalchivill*—a sort of green stone much prized by

- the Mexicans. It was polished and ground. See Bernal Diaz, *Historia de la Conquista*.
- P. 67, l. 22. *Aztec goldsmiths were confessed to have shown skill.* There is no doubt now that the Aztec goldsmiths far exceeded in skill any artists in their craft in Europe. The finest Italian goldsmiths confessed themselves beaten by the Indian artificers.
- P. 72, l. 8. *Maguey*=the *Agave Americana* or *aloe*: a paper was made from it resembling the Egyptian papyrus; the Dresden Codex, the most valuable Aztec MS. in existence, is written on it.
- P. 73, l. 30. *Chinampas*=the artificial floating islands in the salt lake of Texcoco.
- P. 76, l. 9. *Stupendous mass.* These immense stones, according to Peter Martyr (*De Orbe Novo*), who gathered his information from eye-witnesses, were transported by means of long files of men who dragged them with ropes over huge wooden rollers. In the same manner the Egyptians moved their enormous blocks of granite.
- P. 78, l. 5. *Tierra-caliente*=the burning or hot land—the vast dense swamps of the coastal regions. Parched and sandy plains alternate with others of exuberant fertility rendered almost impervious by thickets of wild shrubs and flowers.
- P. 78, l. 15. *Fiery little animal with the castanets in its tail*=the rattlesnake. It can hardly be called a little "animal" however. The reptiles of Central and South America number amongst them some of the largest in the world, such for example as the anaconda, which has been known to attain a length of 60 feet.
- P. 84, l. 6. The figure of the war-god, Huitzilopochtli.
- P. 92, l. 33. *He ate, drank, slept, with his weapons by his side.* The old chronicler, Bernal Diaz, who was one of Cortés's men, writes: "I was so accustomed to this way of life that since the Conquest of the Country, I have never been able to lie down undressed, or in a bed. . . . I throw myself on it with my clothes on. Another thing I must add, that I cannot sleep long in the night without getting up to look at the heavens and the stars and stay a while in the open air, and this without a bonnet or covering of any sort on my head."
- P. 103, l. 10. *Had seen another taking the place he should have occupied.* Cortés sent Marina to ascertain from Montezuma the name of the gallant Aztec chief who could easily be seen from the walls animating and directing his countrymen. The Emperor informed him it was his brother Cuitlahua,

- the presumptive heir to his crown, and the same chief whom the Spanish commander had released a few days previously.
- P. 108, l. 8. *I have but a few moments to live and will not at this hour desert the faith of my fathers.* Gomara and others assert that Montezuma had desired baptism but that in the pressure of the revolt of the Mexicans, it had been overlooked. This is untrue. Cortés would not have forgotten so wonderful a fact.
- P. 113, l. 2. The "*Noche Triste*" was the night of the 30th June, and the morning of the 1st July. The Spaniards reached the shelter of Tlascala on the 8th July.
- P. 114, l. 19. *The second breach.* This was the scene of the defeat and slaughter of the Spaniards. It was in front of San Hipolito where a chapel dedicated to the "Martyrs" (*sic*) was afterwards built.
- P. 116, l. 17. *Maria de Estrada.* She afterwards married Pedro Sanchez Farfan. Her heroism did much to inspire the soldiers with courage. She fought as bravely as any man.
- P. 119, l. 14. *Cleared the wide gap at a leap.* The spot is still pointed out. It is now a ditch of no great width. The story is now discredited; besides, the leap was considered as an act of desertion of his men.
- P. 125, l. 8. The marvellous change in their affairs. It was produced, says Bernal Diaz, by the *appearance* of the militant apostle St Jago (St James) prancing on his white war horse, and mowing down scores of the enemy with the flashing of his mighty sword. Other chroniclers state he was "seen" supported by the Virgin and St Peter.
- P. 126, l. 3. *The street . . . was the great avenue,* etc. This street which is now called the Calle del Rastro and traverses the whole city from north to south.
- P. 127, l. 24. *Wall of serpents.* This wall was adorned with serpents, and crowned with the heads strung together on stakes of the human victims sacrificed in the temple.
- P. 133, l. 31. *Usual celebration of mass.* This was never allowed to be omitted. Even while a battle was proceeding, mass was celebrated. Religion had a deep hold on the Spaniards.
- P. 145, l. 10. *Incline them to listen to accommodation.* To do Cortés justice, he made the most strenuous and repeated efforts to bring the Mexican emperor (Guatemozin) to listen to terms of peace.
- P. 152, l. 11. *Escutcheons.* Neither Holguin nor Sandoval were allowed to commemorate the capture of Guatemozin on their escutcheon. The Emperor Charles V. granted that to

- Cortés, who was permitted to bear three crowns of gold on a ~~gale~~ ^{table} field, one above the other, two in token of his victory over the three lords of Mexico, Montezuma, Cuitlahua, and Guatemozin.
- P. 154, l. 20. *Day following the surrender.* The event (13th Aug. 1521) was always commemorated by a solemn procession round the walls of the capital city, so long as the Spanish Colonial Government was in existence.
- P. 155, l. 17. *Teocallis*—temples. Note the likeness of this Mexican word to the Greek compound *θεοκαλλία*. Around the teocallis were flocks of *Zopilotes* or vultures.
- P. 160, l. 16. *Nations of antiquity.* Both in Greece and Rome they were common, being interdicted in the century before the Christian era, by a law which Pliny praises.

PERU

- P. 161, l. 15. *Principal cities of Spain depopulated.* The Venetian ambassador Andrea Navagiro, who travelled through Spain in 1525, near the period of the commencement of our narrative, notices the general fever of emigration. Seville in particular, the great port of embarkation, was so stripped of its inhabitants, "he says," that the city was left almost to women.
- P. 162, l. 10. *Magical fountain of health.* A report was come from the East regarding a fountain of which whoso drank suffered sickness no more, and lived to extreme age: see *Arabian Nights*, Story of the Fairy, Peri Banou. Gradually the fountain came to be located in the "Far West."
- P. 162, l. 11. *Golden temple of Doboyba; golden sepulchres of Zenu.* Mythical places where a fabulous store of gold was said to be laid up.
- P. 162, l. 22. *Balboa*—for his life. Washington Irving's *Companions of Columbus*. Robertson's *America*.
- P. 165, l. 55. *His birth uncertain*—the date of Pizarro's birth is found by reckoning his age at the time of his death.
- P. 169, l. 18 ff. *The three associates . . . should contribute . . . undertaking.* Andagoya states that the Governor was interested equally with the other associates in the adventure, each taking a fourth part. Pedrarias, however, resigned his before any profits were realised.
- P. 170, l. 15. *More than a hundred men.* Some say as much as one hundred and twenty men.
- P. 173, l. 31. *Invasion of Quito. . . Huayna Capac.* The Conquest of Quito by Huayna Capac took place more than

- thirty years before this period in our history. But the particulars of this revolution were probably only vaguely comprehended by the rude nations in the neighbourhood of Panamá.
- P. 184, l. 25. *Eleven others.* The names of these thirteen heroes have been preserved. They all attained fame: they were Bartolomé Ruiz, Cristoval de Peralta, Pedro de Candra, Domingo de Soria Luce, Nicolas de Rebera, Francisco de Cuellar, Alonzo de Molina, Pedro Alcon, Garcia de Jerez, Anton de Carrion, Alonzo Briceno, Martin de Paz, Joan de la Torre.
- P. 192, l. 20. *As became a good knight, etc.* It was moreover stated that the Indians, desirous to prove still further the superhuman nature of the Spanish cavalier, let loose on him a tiger—a jaguar probably which was caged in the royal fortress. But Don Pedro was a good Catholic, and he gently laid the cross which he wore round his neck on the animal's back, which instantly forgetting his ferocious nature crouched at the cavalier's feet.
- P. 193, l. 22. *Number of artisans at work. . . . religious houses.* Cieza de Leon, who crossed this part of the country in 1542, expressly refers to the wanton manner in which the hand of the Conqueror destroyed Indian buildings and works of art.
- P. 198, l. 25. *Great battle of Pavia,* fought in 1525 between Francis I. of France and the Emperor Charles V., King of Spain and Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.
- P. 200, l. 20. *The Queen.* There seems some confusion here, between the Empress Isabella and the unfortunate Queen Juanna, Charles's mother. It was the latter who expedited Pizarro's affairs.
- P. 208, l. 13. *St Michael and his legions.* The city of San Miguel commemorates this legend.
- P. 210, l. 24. *Huascar.* Means in the Peruvian language a cable. The reason for its being given to the heir apparent is remarkable. Huayna Capac, the father, celebrated the birth of the prince by a festival, in which he introduced a massive gold chain for the nobles to hold in their hands as they performed their national dances. The chain was 700 feet in length, and the links nearly as large round, as a man's wrist.
- P. 220, l. 3. *Put to death.* This was confessed by Atahualpa on the evening after his capture. Soto's charger might well have made the Indians start, if, as stated by Balboa, it took a leap of 20 feet and that with a cavalier in full armour on its back.

- P. 228, l. 7. *Set on at once : I will absolve you.* The remark by the friar has been oftentimes denied, but there seems no doubt that it was made.
- P. 231, l. 28. *Senses must have been completely overwhelmed.* According to the Indians themselves they were less astounded by the wild uproar, than by the terrible apparition which appeared in the air during the onslaught. It consisted of a woman and a child, and at their side a horseman all clothed in white on a milk-white charger—the valiant St Jago (James) with his sword flashing lightning,
- P. 247, l. 30. *He was revered as more than human.* Such was the awe in which the Inca was held that it was only necessary for him to intimate his commands to that effect, and a Peruvian would at once leap down a precipice, or put an end to his life in any way that was prescribed.

GLOSSARY

- Alcayceria*, silk market of Granada, p. 79, l. 21.
- Arquebus*, a fifteenth and sixteenth century hand-gun, often fired from a stand, p. 14, l. 12.
- Azoteas*, the flat roofs of Mexican houses, p. 94, l. 15.
- Balsa*, a Mexican vessel for ocean sailing, p. 188, l. 17.
- Borla*, the circular fringe indicative of the rank of the Inca, which extended from the forehead to the eye-brows, p. 225, l. 13.
- Brigantines*, a sixteenth century undecked vessel: like our modern coble or yawl, p. 14, l. 2.
- Cacao*, the chocolate tree from the seeds of which chocolate is made, p. 180, l. 30.
- Cacique*, a territorial chief-tain among the ancient Mexicans and Peruvians, p. 16, l. 23.
- Caravel*, a light sailing vessel, p. 14, l. 2.
- Chalchivuitl*, a kind of stone not unlike the Maori greenstone, and akin to the emerald; held in high estimation by Mexicans, p. 63, l. 27.
- Chicha*, the fermented juice of the maize, p. 255, l. 21.
- Chinampas*, artificial floating islands, p. 73, l. 30.
- Copilli*, the Mexican crown, p. 104, l. 4.
- Escaupil*, cotton mail, p. 40, l. 3.
- Esmeraldas*, emeralds, p. 205, l. 24.
- Falconet*, a small field-gun in use till the 16th century, p. 14, l. 15.
- Itzli*, a kind of polished lava resembling natural glass. It was dipped in

- some other substance to temper and harden it, p. 37, l. 27.
- Maguey*, the Agave Americana or aloe, p. 72, l. 8.
- Maquahuitl*, Indian sword, p. 80, l. 12.
- Maxtlatl*, coloured cotton sash covering the loins of Mexicans, p. 61, l. 28.
- Mitimaes*, emigrants transplanted from one part of the country of Peru to another, p. 261, l. 15.
- Orejon*, Peruvian, noble, p. 189, l. 27.
- Panache*, plume of feathers used as a head-dress, p. 38, l. 32.
- Plaza*, a square or market place, p. 222, l. 7.
- Repartimiento*, an allocation of Indian labourers, the number of which was based upon the extent of the grant of land, p. 7, l. 21.
- Tamanes*, levies of carriers; the load of each *tamane* or carrier was 50 lbs. for 15 miles, p. 50, l. 2.
- Tetzontli*, the porous red sandstone of Mexico, p. 71, l. 16.
- Tianguex*, the great market place of Mexico.
- Tierra caliente*, the hot-land, p. 194, l. 11. The hot zone in Peru and Mexico passed by this name.
- Tilmatl*, a long square cloak fastened with cords at the neck, p. 63, l. 21; the royal mantle of white and blue also passed by this name, p. 103, l. 32.
- Vomitores*, wide doors leading from a market place; teste Caxamalca, p. 222, l. 10.
- Zopilote*, the Mexican vulture, see note upon p. 267.

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